



AWW
HECK!

AWW
BEANS!

I LEFT
THE UMBRELLA
IN MY ROOM!



WE'RE GONNA
BE SOOOO LATE
FOR CLASS, NOW!



IF BY
"WE" YOU
MEAN "ME"
THEN YOU'D
BE RIGHT!



... REALLY?



WELL, UH...
I'M EATING
YOUR LAST
BERRY CAKE,
YOU JERK!



WELL
GOLLY!

ALRIGHT,
I THINK
I LEFT IT
BY THE--



GASP!



KOOON

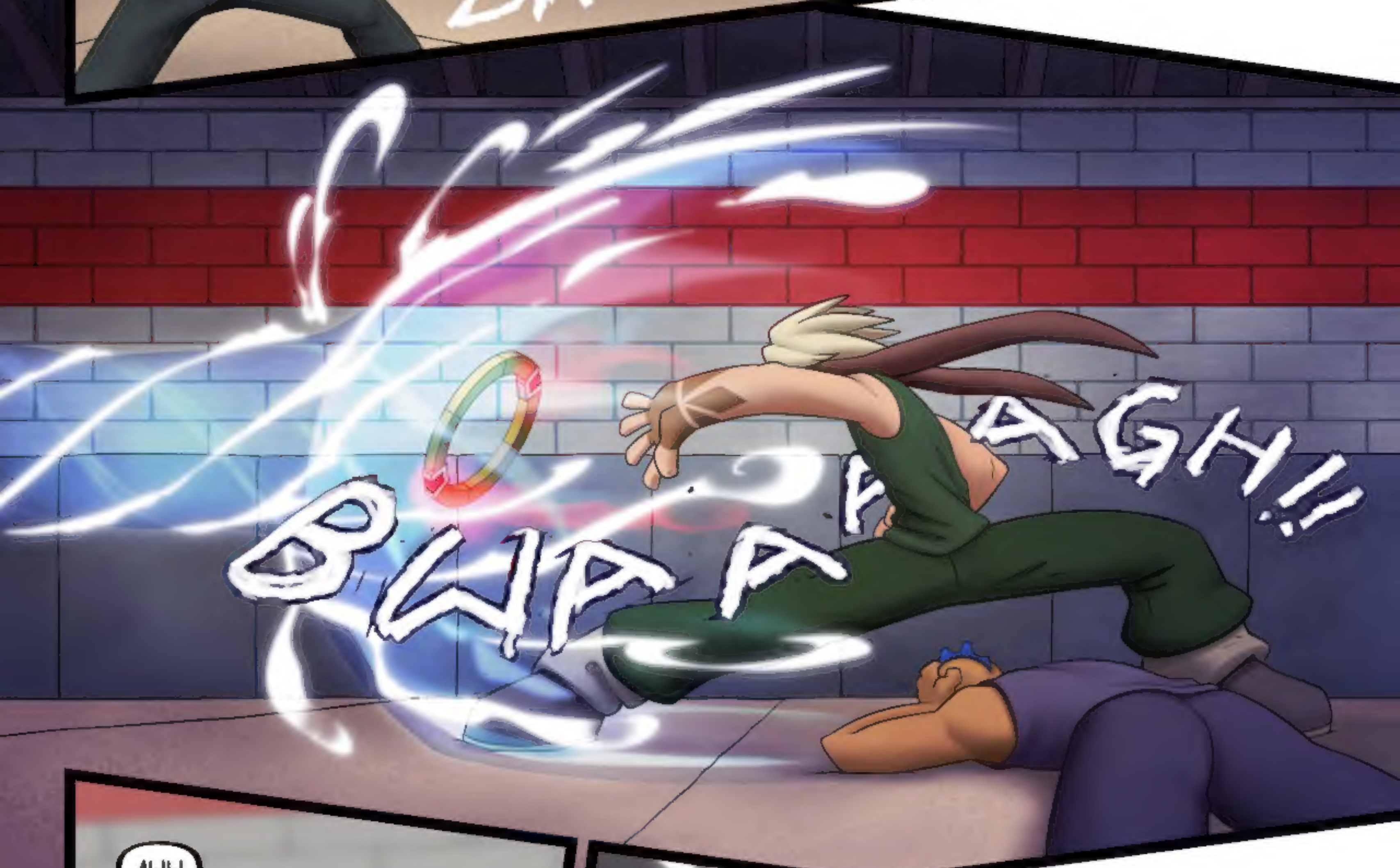
CRASH!

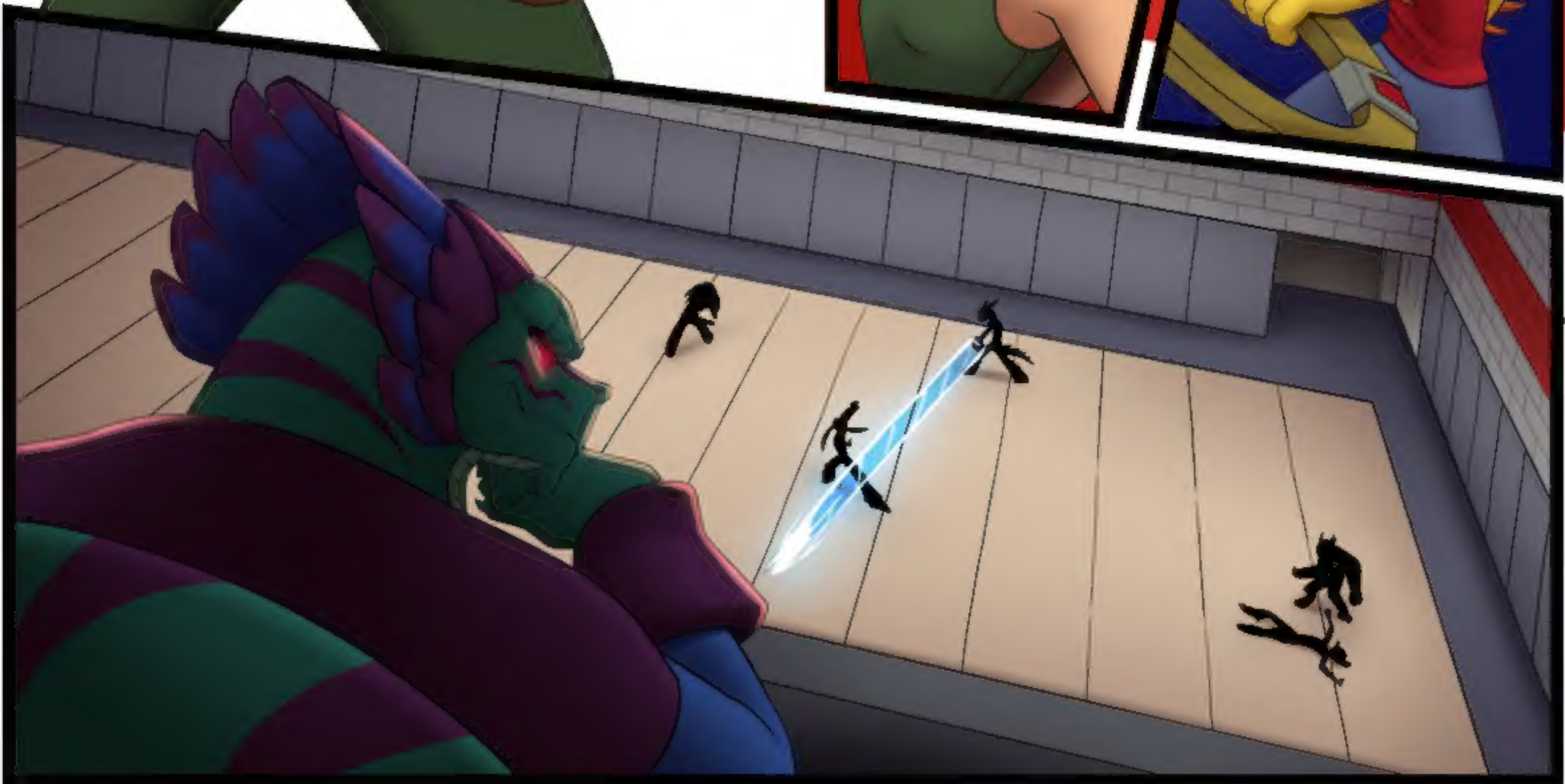
WHAT THE...

BWA

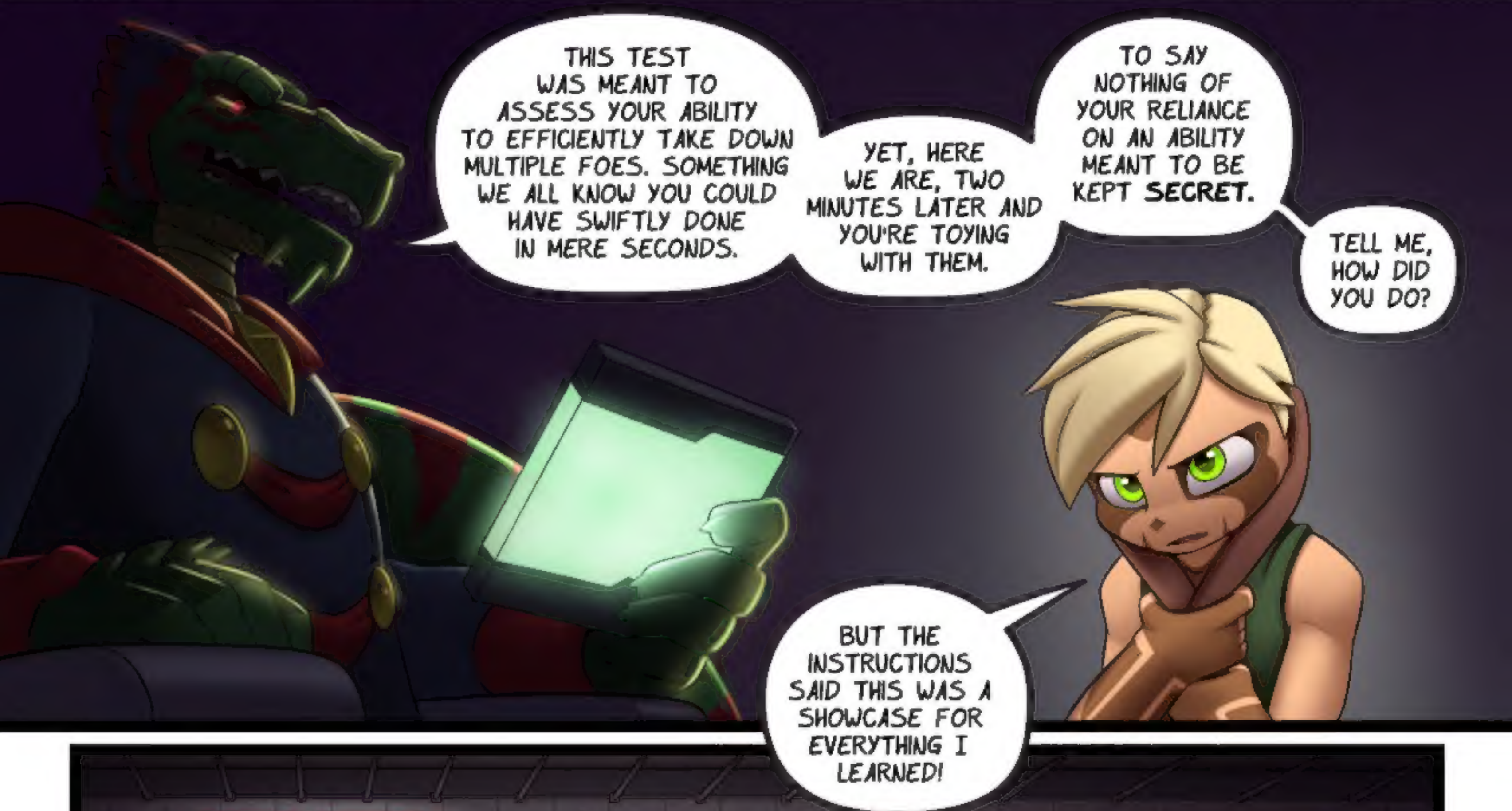
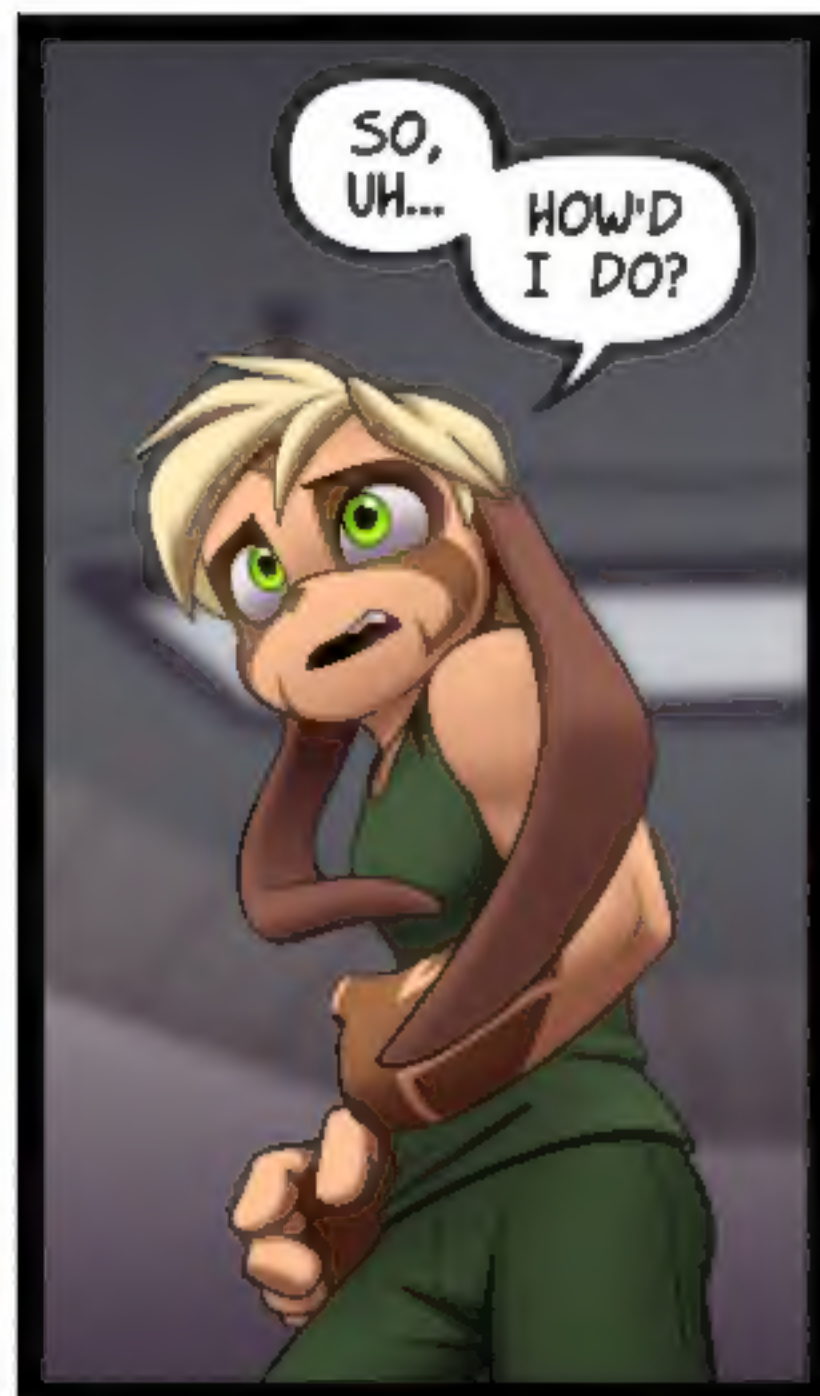
AFA







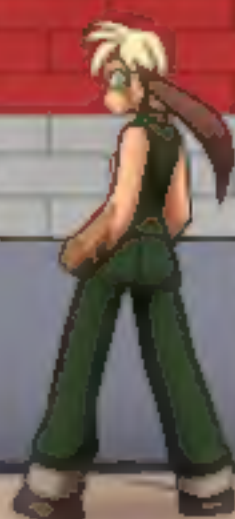




THESE ARE
SOME OF THE BEST
STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS.
MANY WILL SOMEDAY BE
YOUR SUBORDINATES.

NOW THEY
HAVE BEEN HURT
AND HUMILIATED.

PERHAPS THEY
ARE EVEN AFRAID
OF THEIR FUTURE
COMMANDING
OFFICER.



BUT THAT'S--
THAT'S THE POINT,
ISN'T IT?

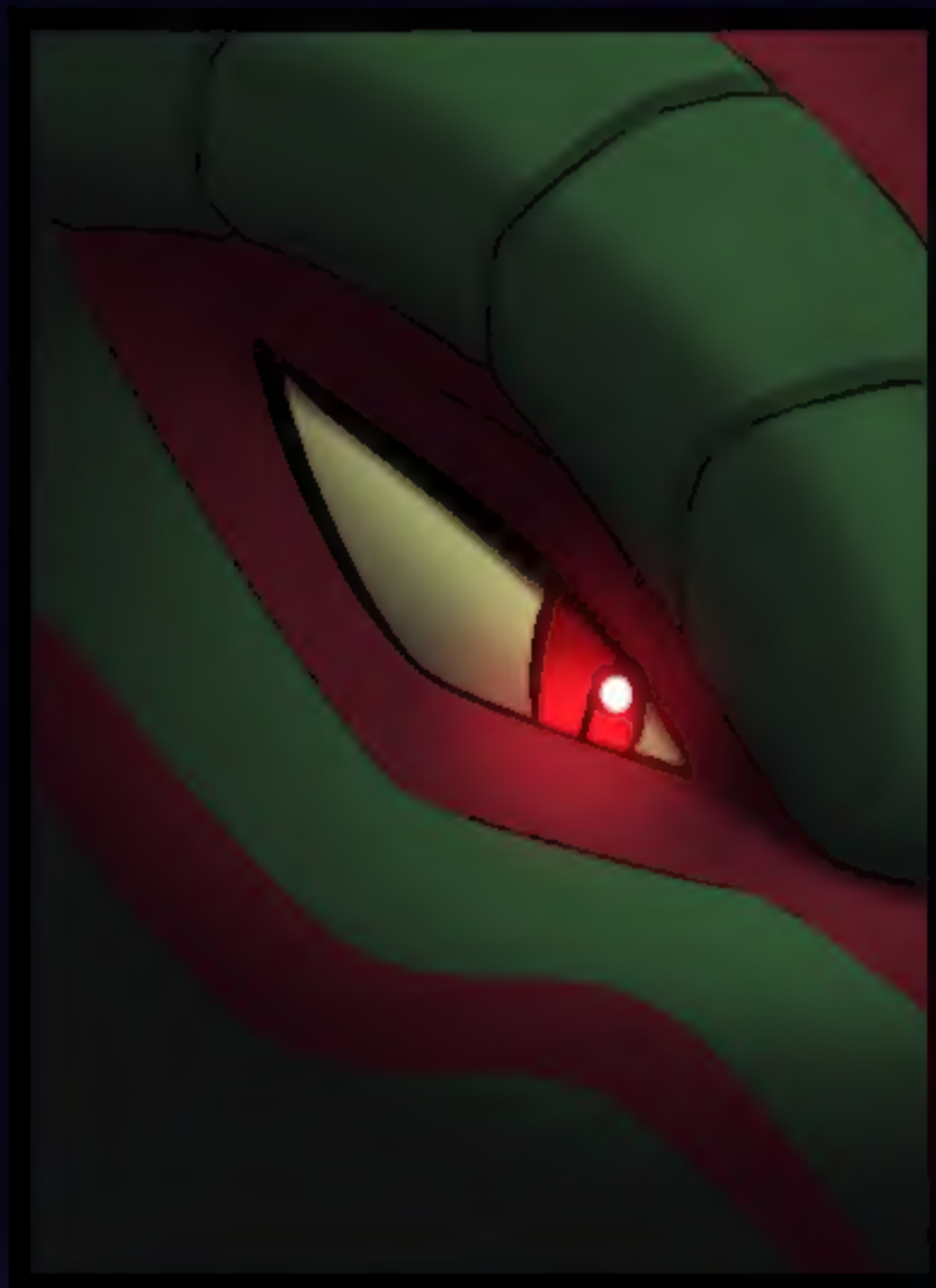
I-I MEAN,
A COMMANDER HAS
TO PROVE THEY'RE THE
STRONGEST. THAT CAN'T
WAIT UNTIL THEY FACE
REAL ENEMIES.

ANY DOUBT
IN THEIR ABILITIES
COMPROMISES UNIT
INTEGRITY.

I'M JUST
PROVING I
BELONG IN
THIS ROLE.

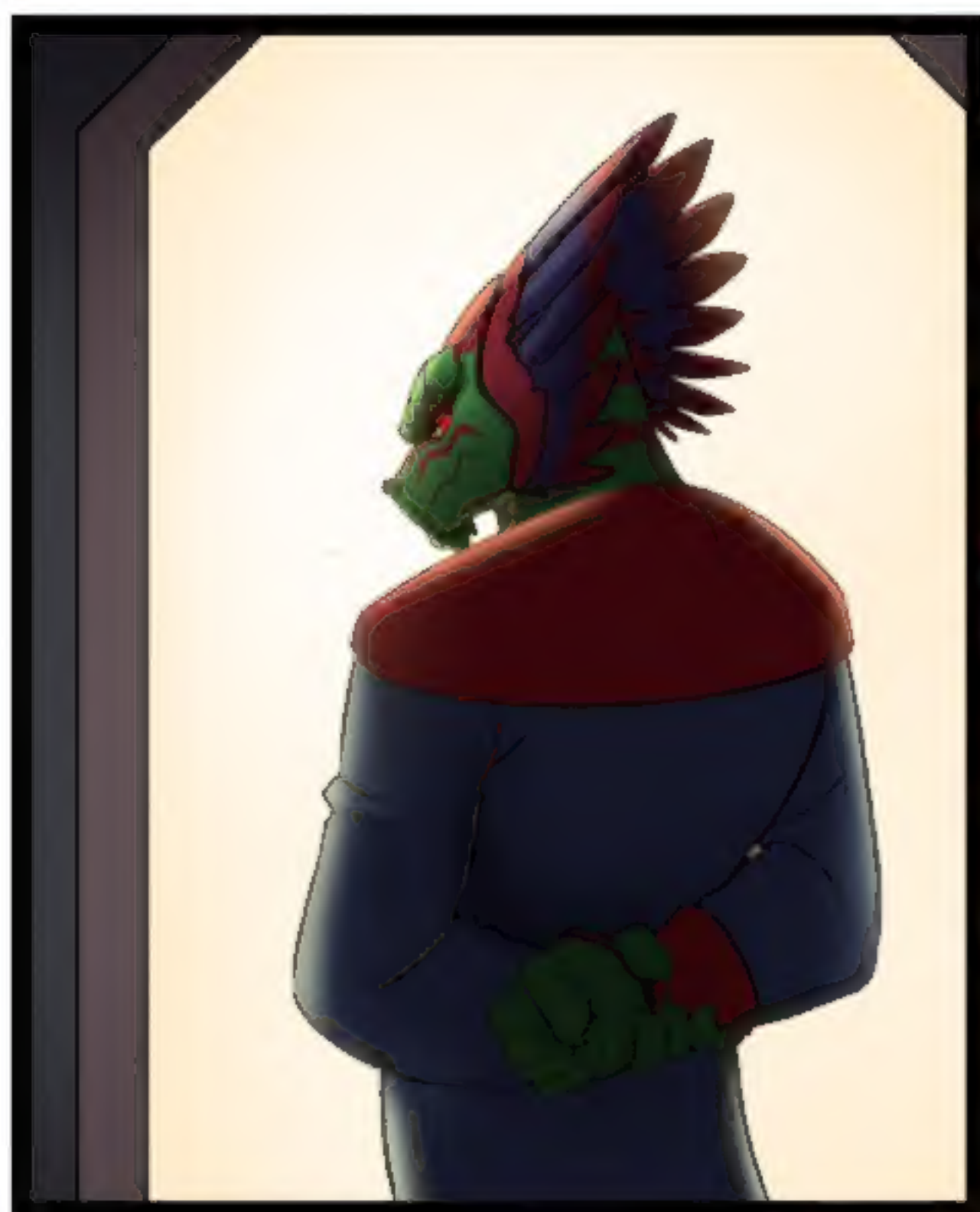
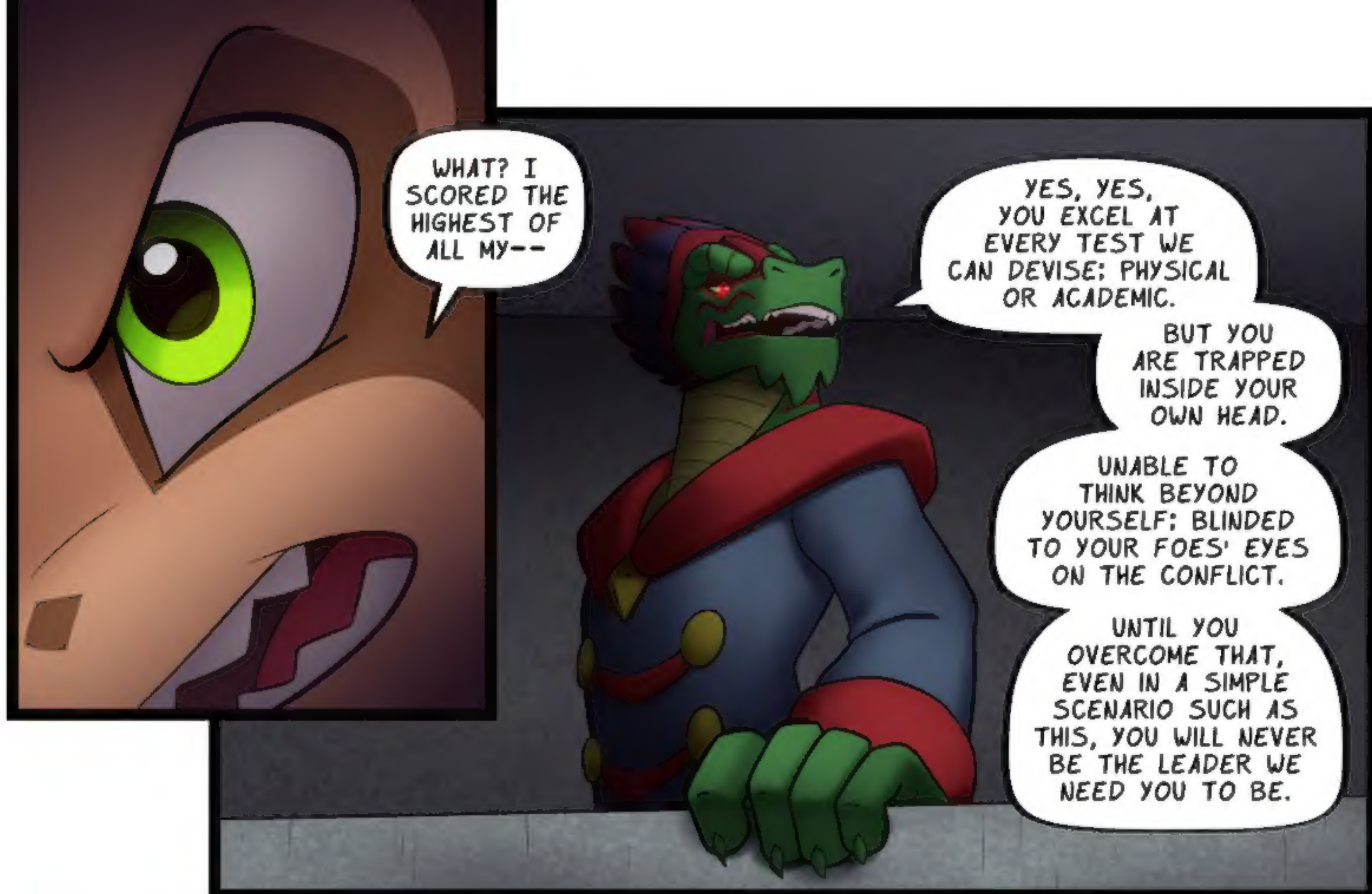
RIGHT?

AS THEIR
LEADER, IT'S MY
RESPONSIBILITY
TO... TO...

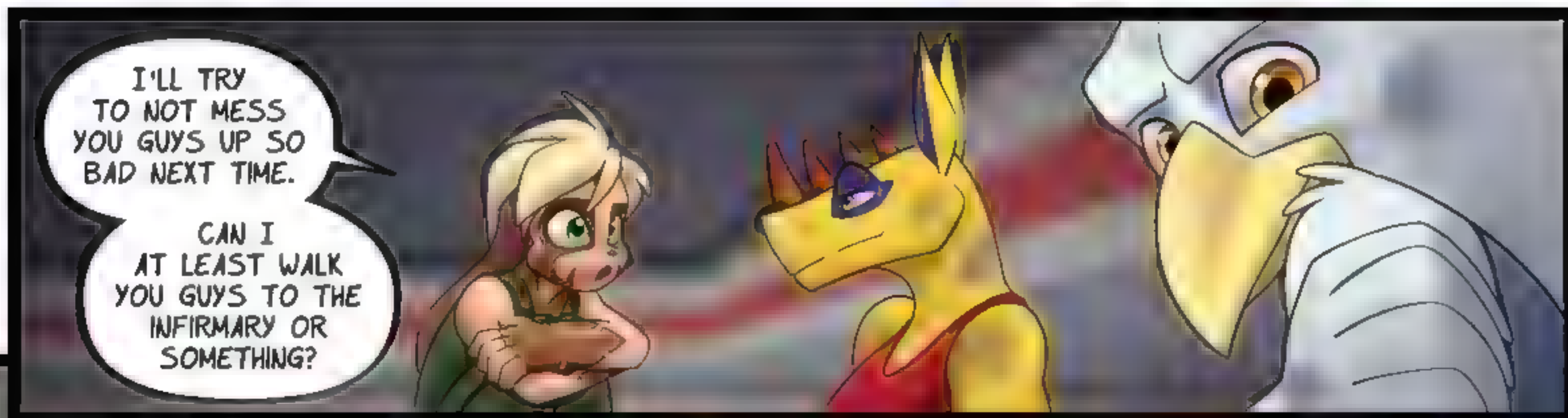


YOU WILL
REMAIN IN
THE TRAINING
PROGRAM FOR ONE
MORE YEAR.



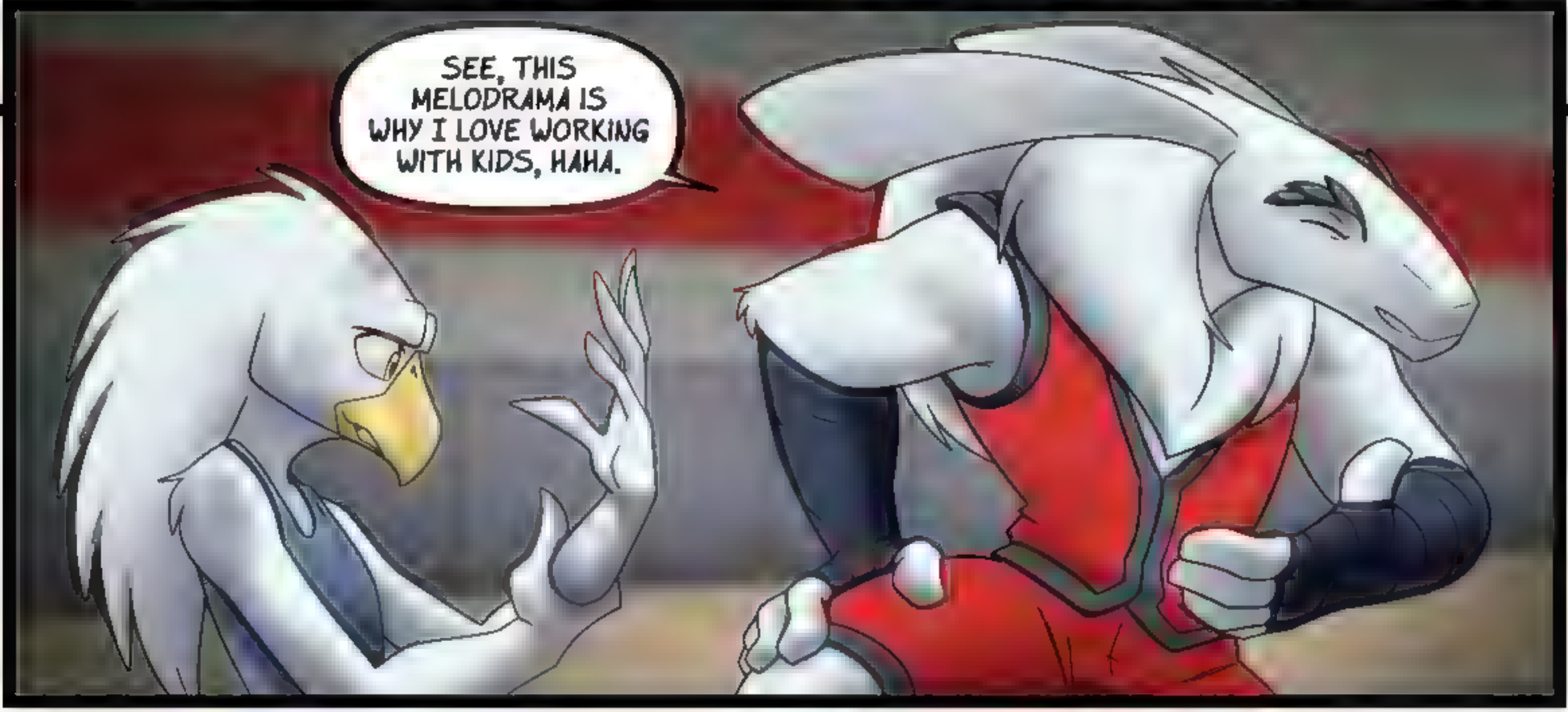
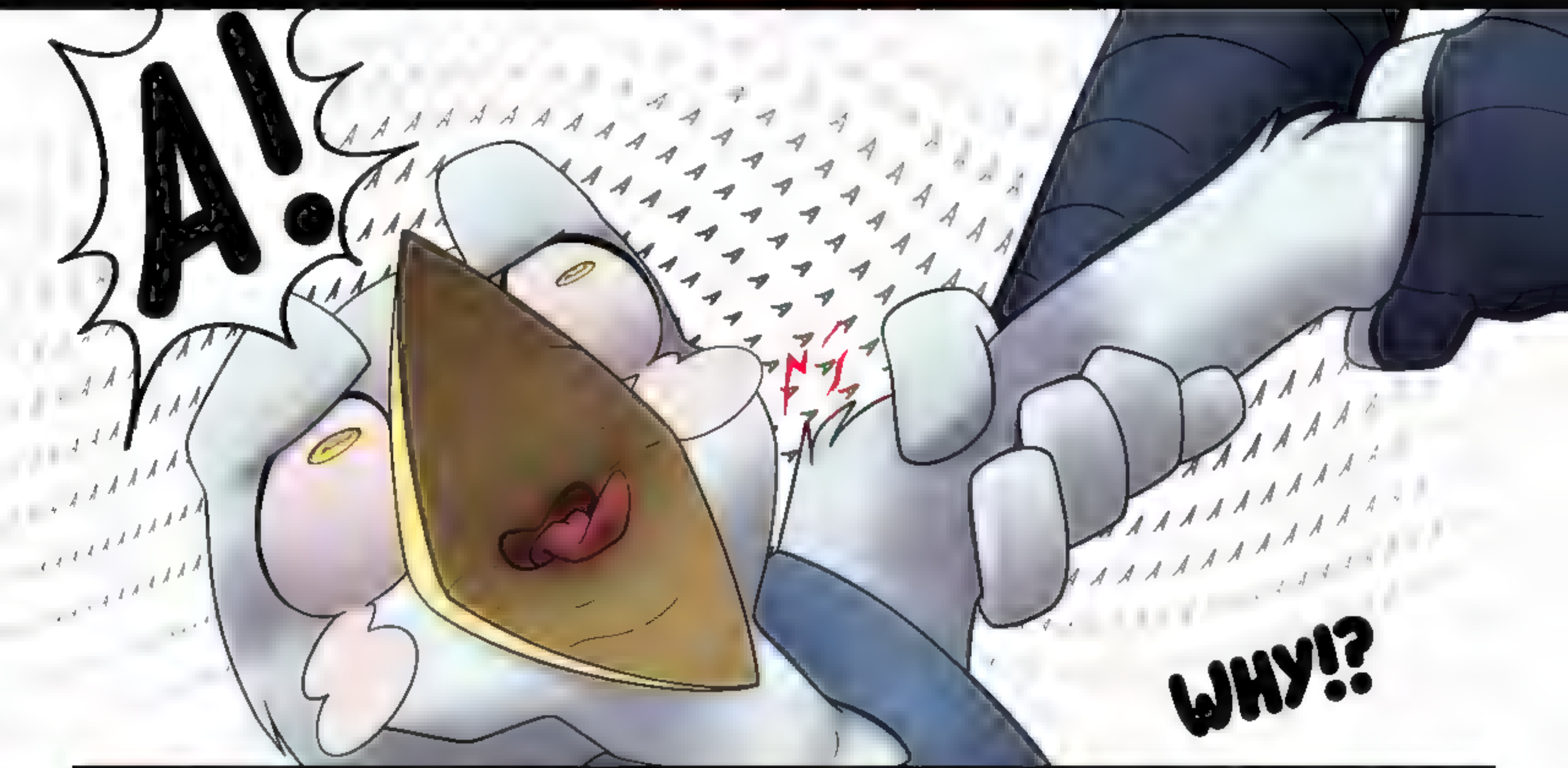


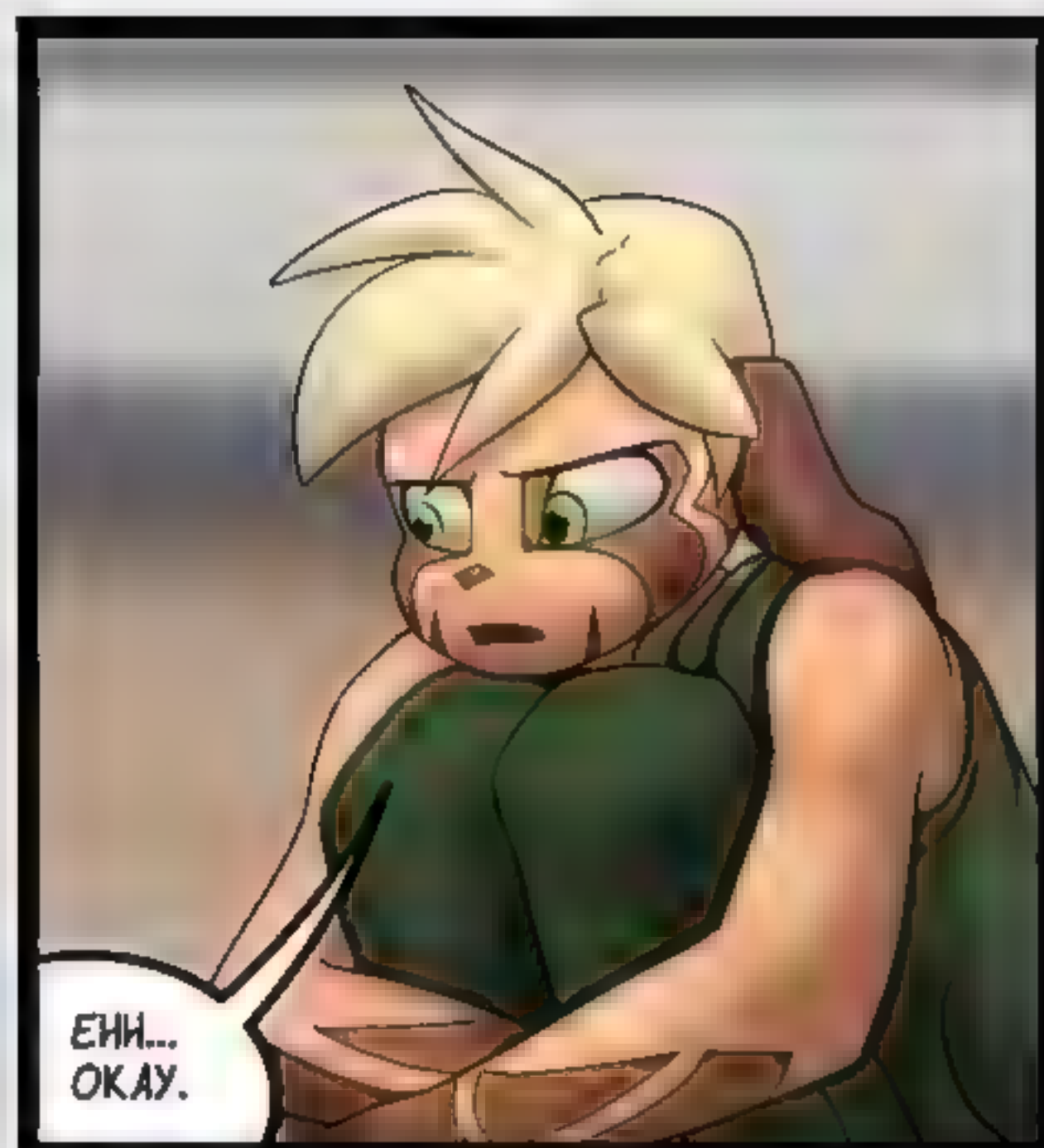


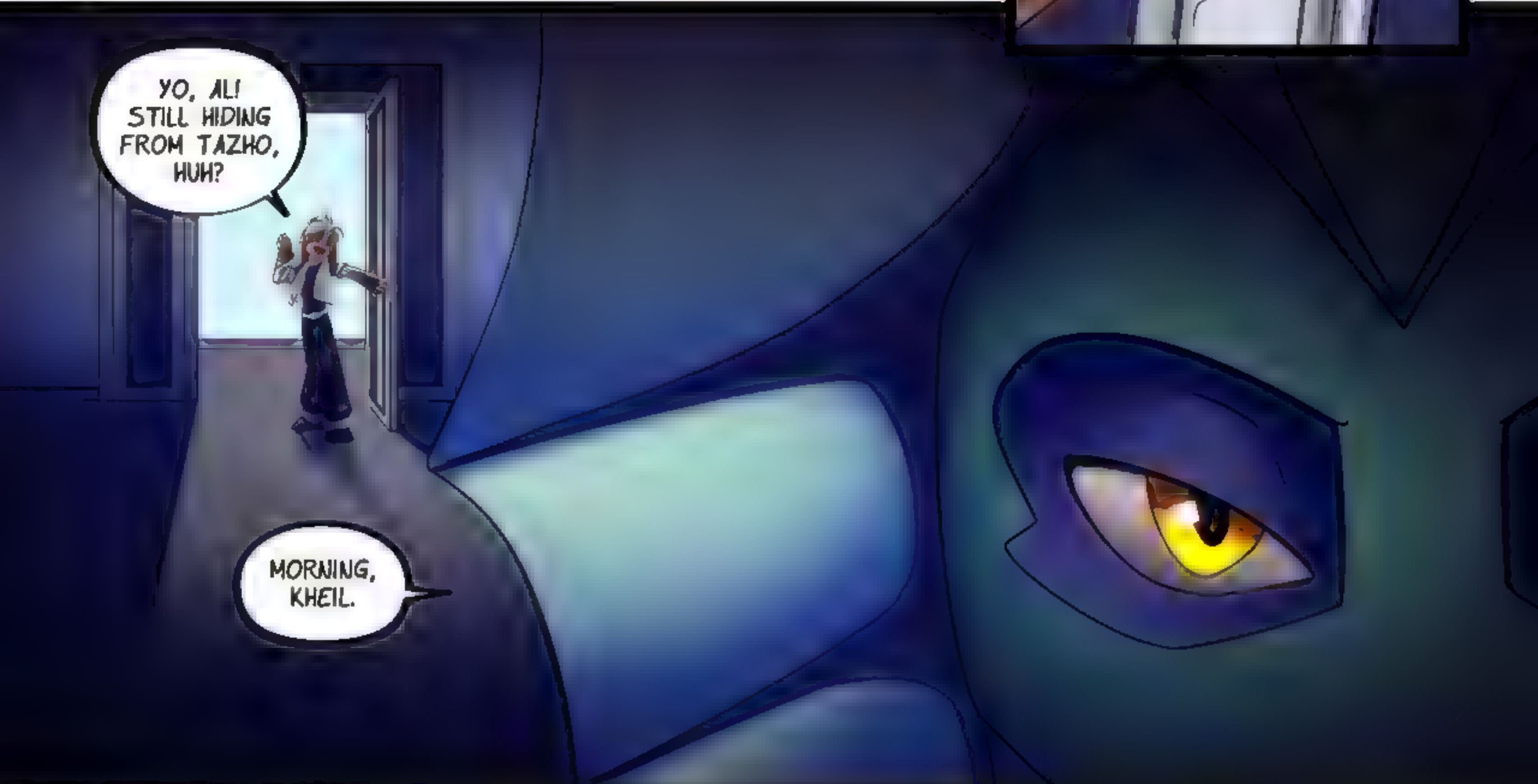
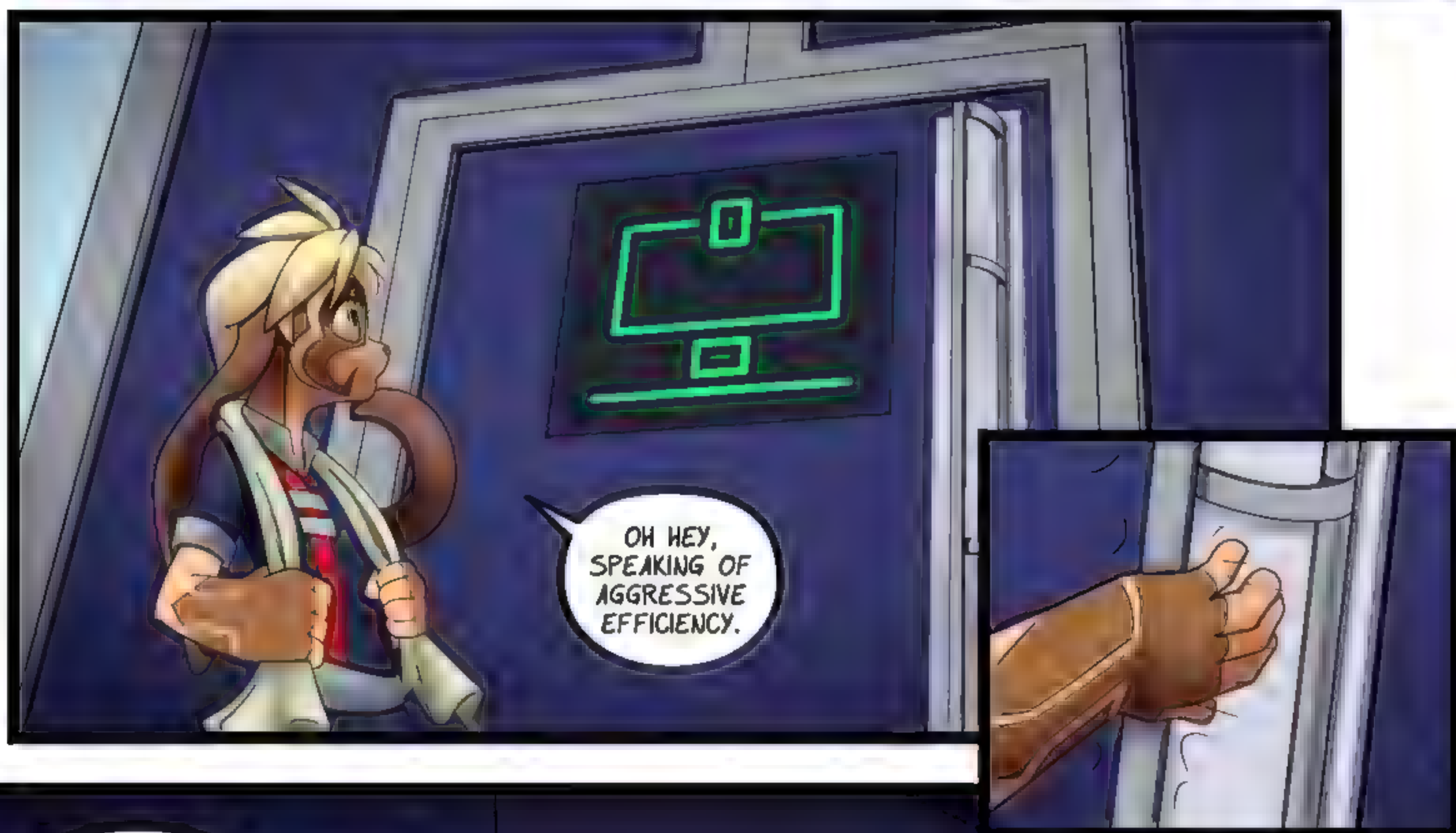




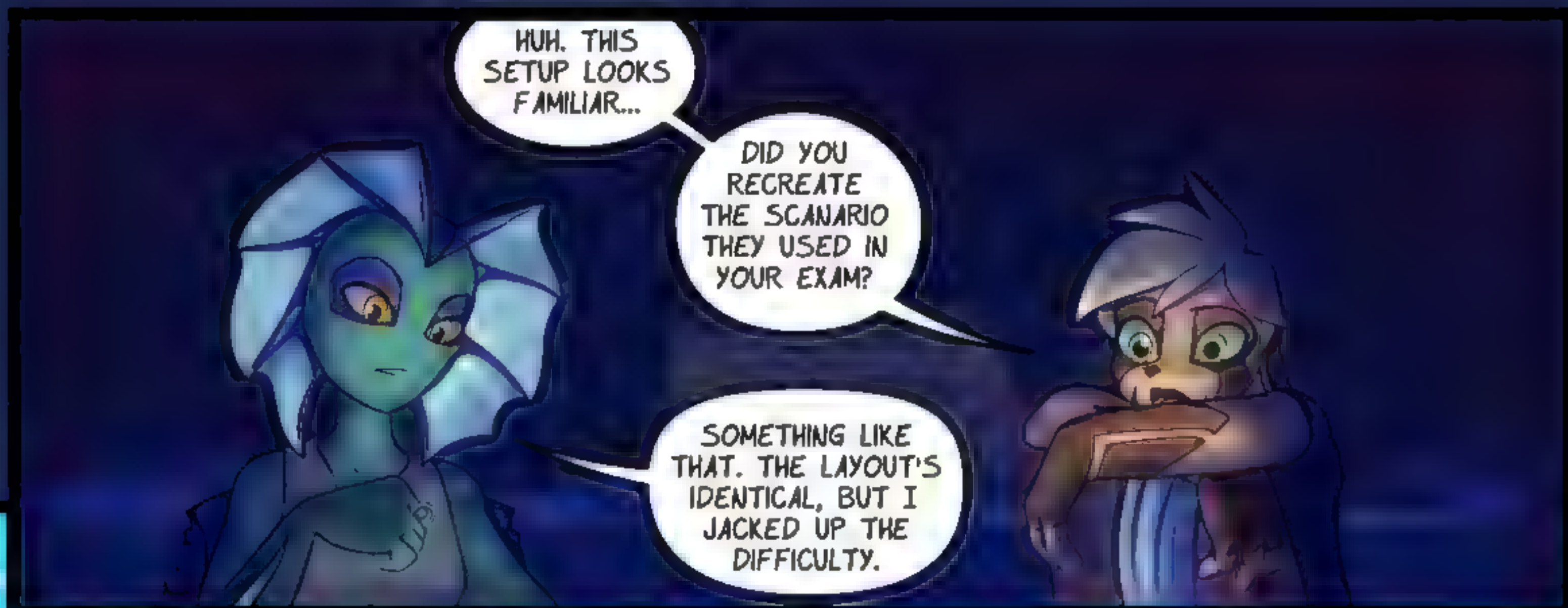
TA-KOK

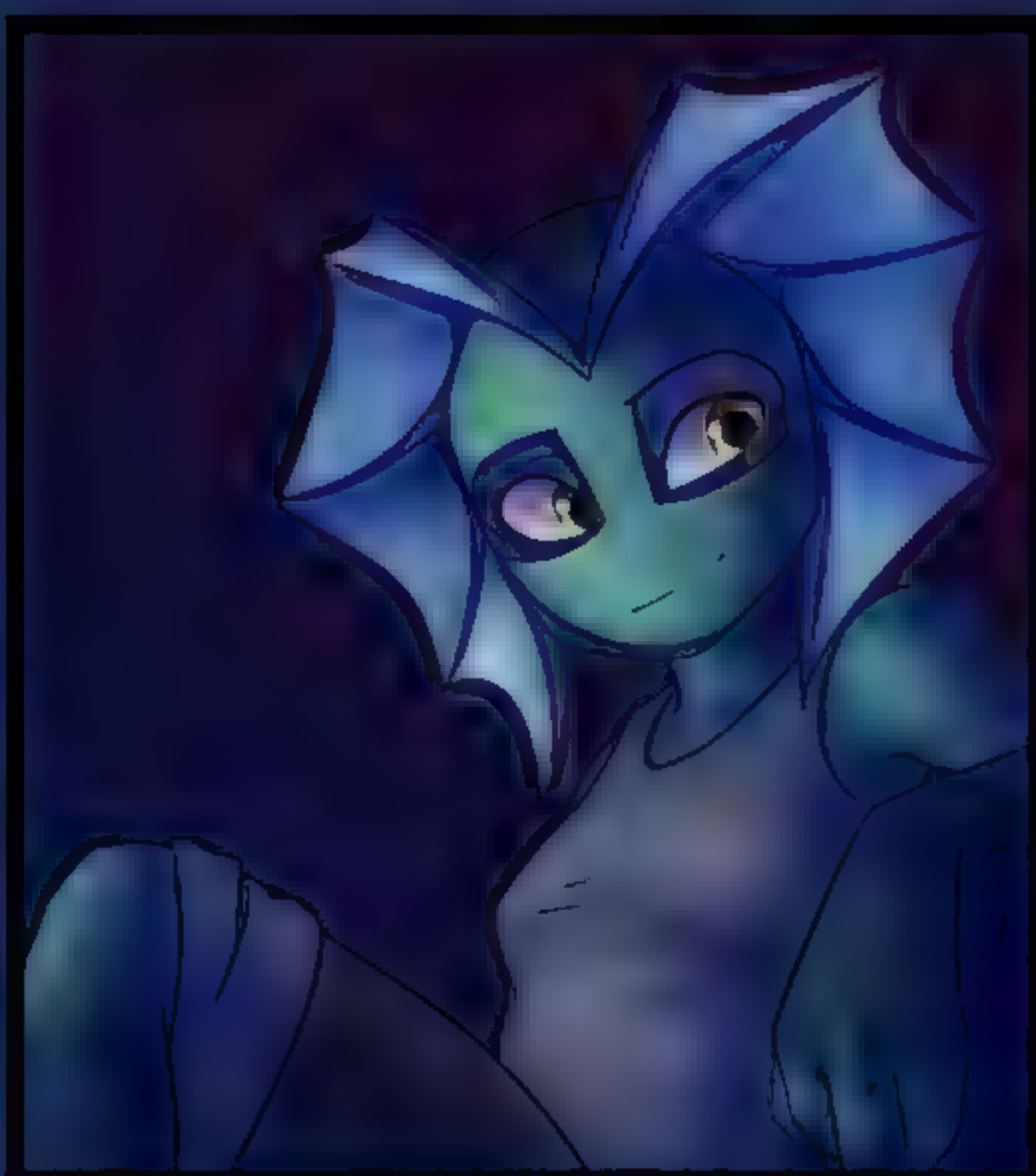
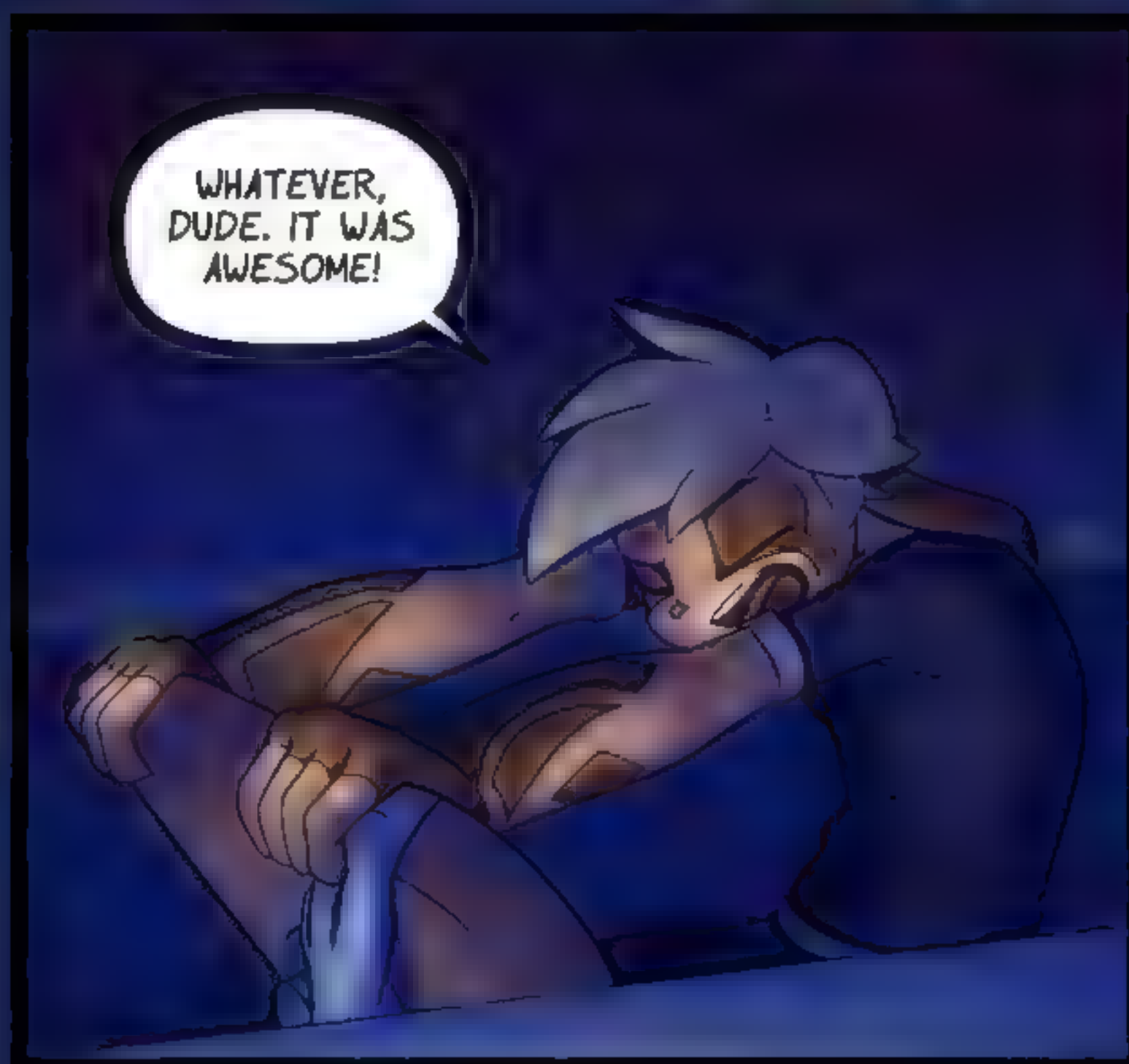


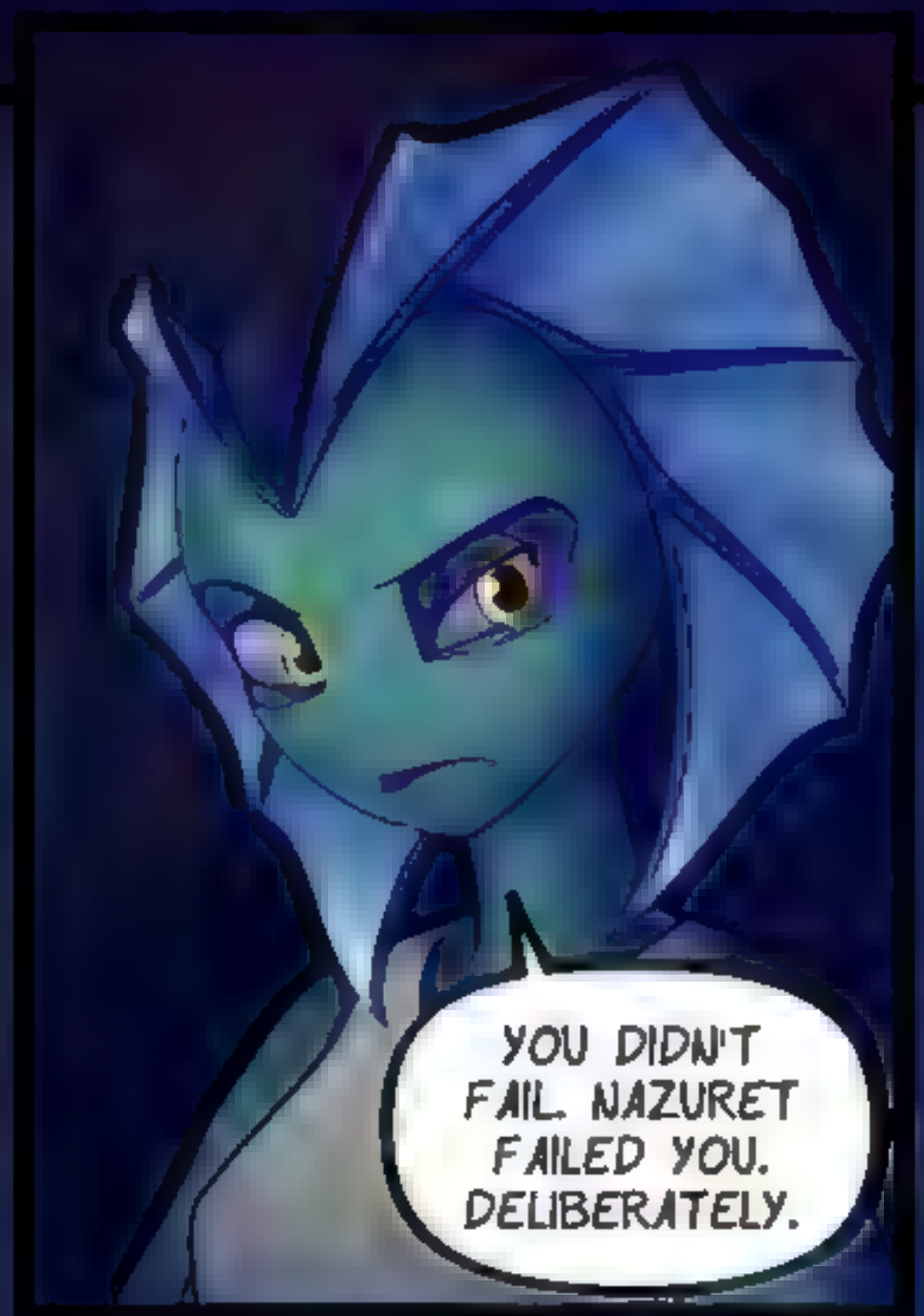
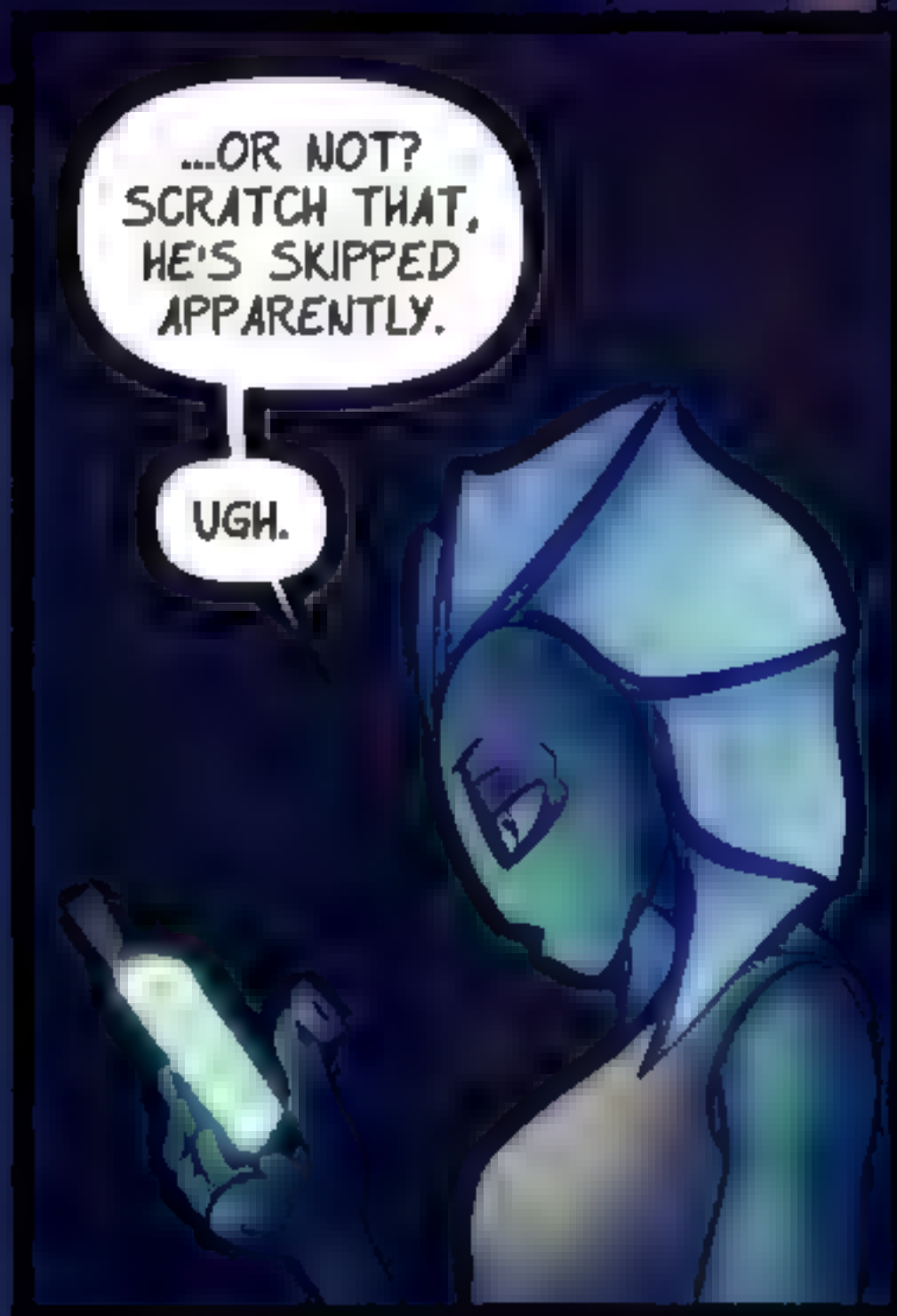


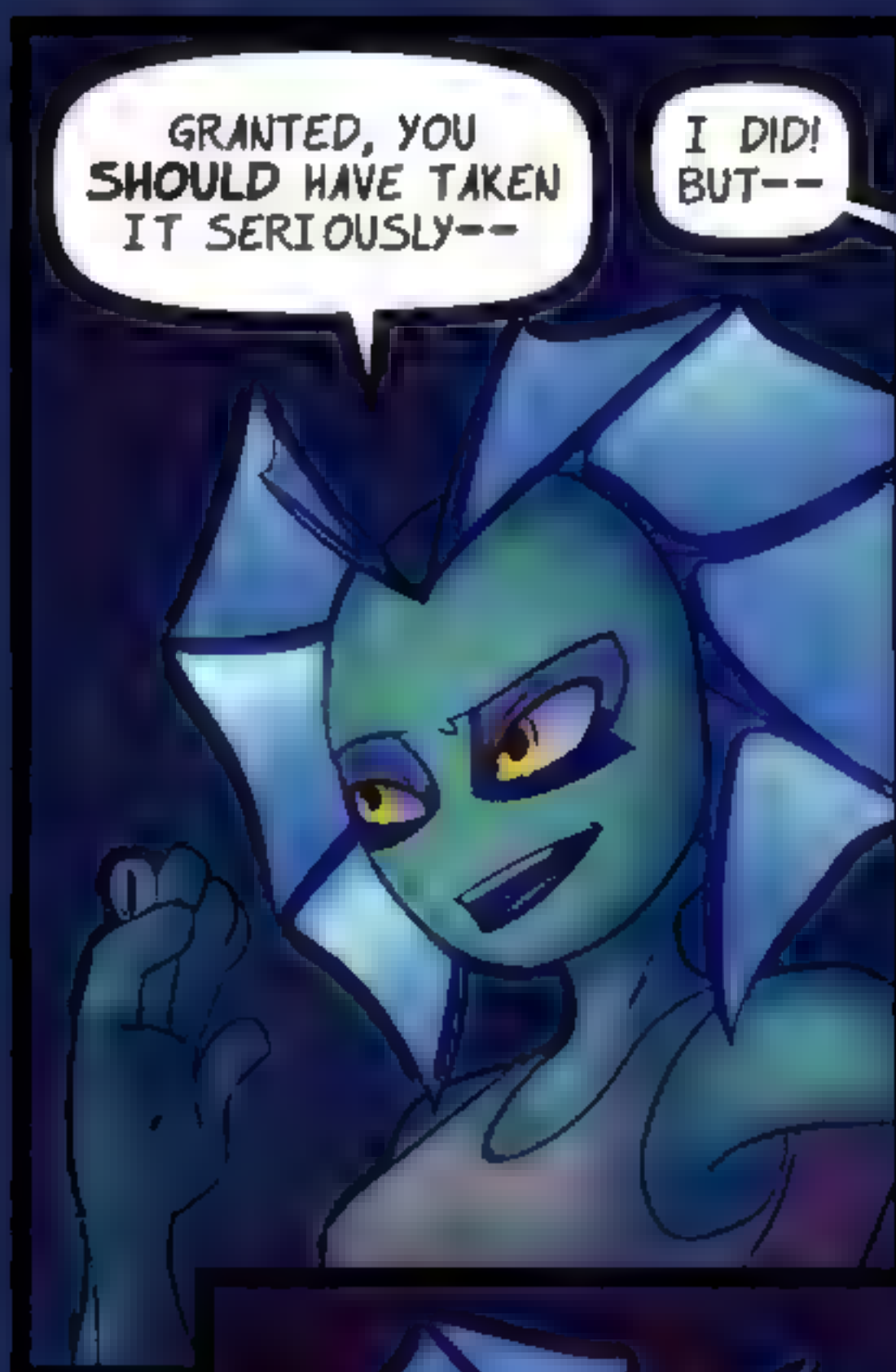












GRANTED, YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN IT SERIOUSLY--

I DID! BUT--



A REAL SOLDIER DOESN'T TOY WITH A THREAT. THEY DESTROY IT.

INSTANT TAKEDOWNS.

BUT YOUR TECHNIQUE IS SOLID. I WAS IMPRESSED.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THAT "THINK ABOUT THE CONFLICT BEYOND YOURSELF" OR WHATEVER CRAP?



EASY, HE JUST WANTS YOU TO PAY ATTENTION.

FIGURE OUT THE QUICKEST PATH TO VICTORY AND GO FOR TOTAL ANNIHILATION.



NEVER UNDERESTIMATE YOUR OPPONENT. ALL FIGHTERS OBSERVE.

THE MORE YOU SHOW OFF, THE MORE THEY LEARN ABOUT YOUR STRENGTHS.

AND YOUR WEAKNESSES.

ANY DECENT SOLDIER COULD SPOT AN OPENING AND POUNCE.



SO... DON'T SHOW OFF.



I GUESS.



DON'T GUESS.

ACCEPT.

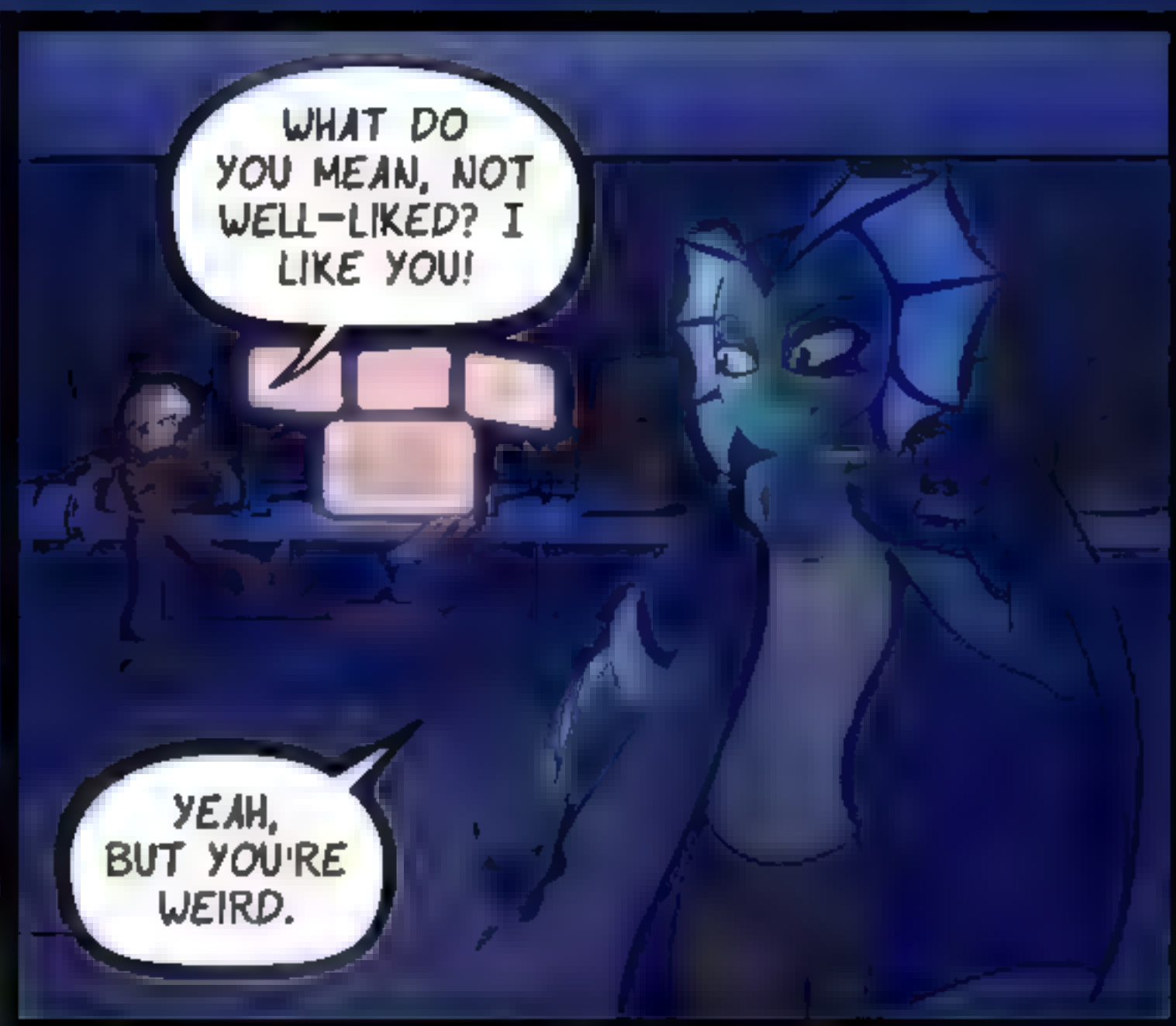
RELAX, KHEIL. IT'LL BE BACK TO NORMAL SOON.

BESIDES, AT LEAST YOU'RE STILL SOMEWHAT RESPECTED.



I, ON THE OTHER HAND, AM NOT WELL-LIKED AT THE MOMENT.

SO I'M OFF TO YELL AT A CERTAIN DEAR FRIEND WHO'S GONE A.W.O.L.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, NOT WELL-LIKED? I LIKE YOU!

YEAH, BUT YOU'RE WEIRD.

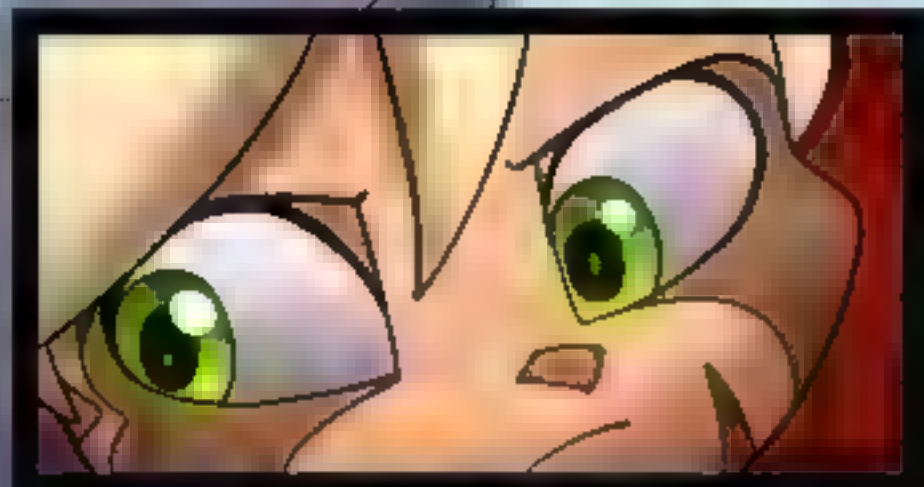


DID YOU JUST IMPLY THAT I'M NOT AWESOME?

HEH.

I "IMPLIED" THAT YOU CARE TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK, AND IT'S IMPACTING YOUR ABILITY TO DO THE JOB.

ESPECIALLY IN REGARDS TO YOUR FATHER.





MAN, NO
ONE ELSE IS
EVER SO BLUNT
WITH ME.
MAYBE I
SHOULD LISTEN
TO YOU MORE.



I CERTAINLY
WOULDN'T MIND
HAVING MORE OF
YOUR POWER AT
MY DISPOSAL.

MWA-HA
HAAAAH.



POP QUIZ:
WHAT'S YOUR
NEXT STEP?

UH... FIND
A WAY TO GET
MY POINT ACROSS
TO DAD?

PRECISELY.



ALRIGHT,
COMMANDER, LET'S
MOVE OUT.

YOU'VE GOT
AN OBJECTIVE TO
COMPLETE, AND I'VE
GOT A TRUANT TO
ROUND UP.

RIGHT
BEHIND YOU,
GENERAL!



TOZ GEZOTET
TUOKHEM...

GIGGLES!

I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU SAID
BUT I LIKE HOW
YOU SAID IT.

OZ UTAGA
TEPKAT AGANUZ
TAKUZO.

TOZ
ZORENET.

TEEHEEHEE,
ALRIGHT, I GOT
THAT ONE.

PEW!!

WAIT. PEOPLE
CAN SEE US?

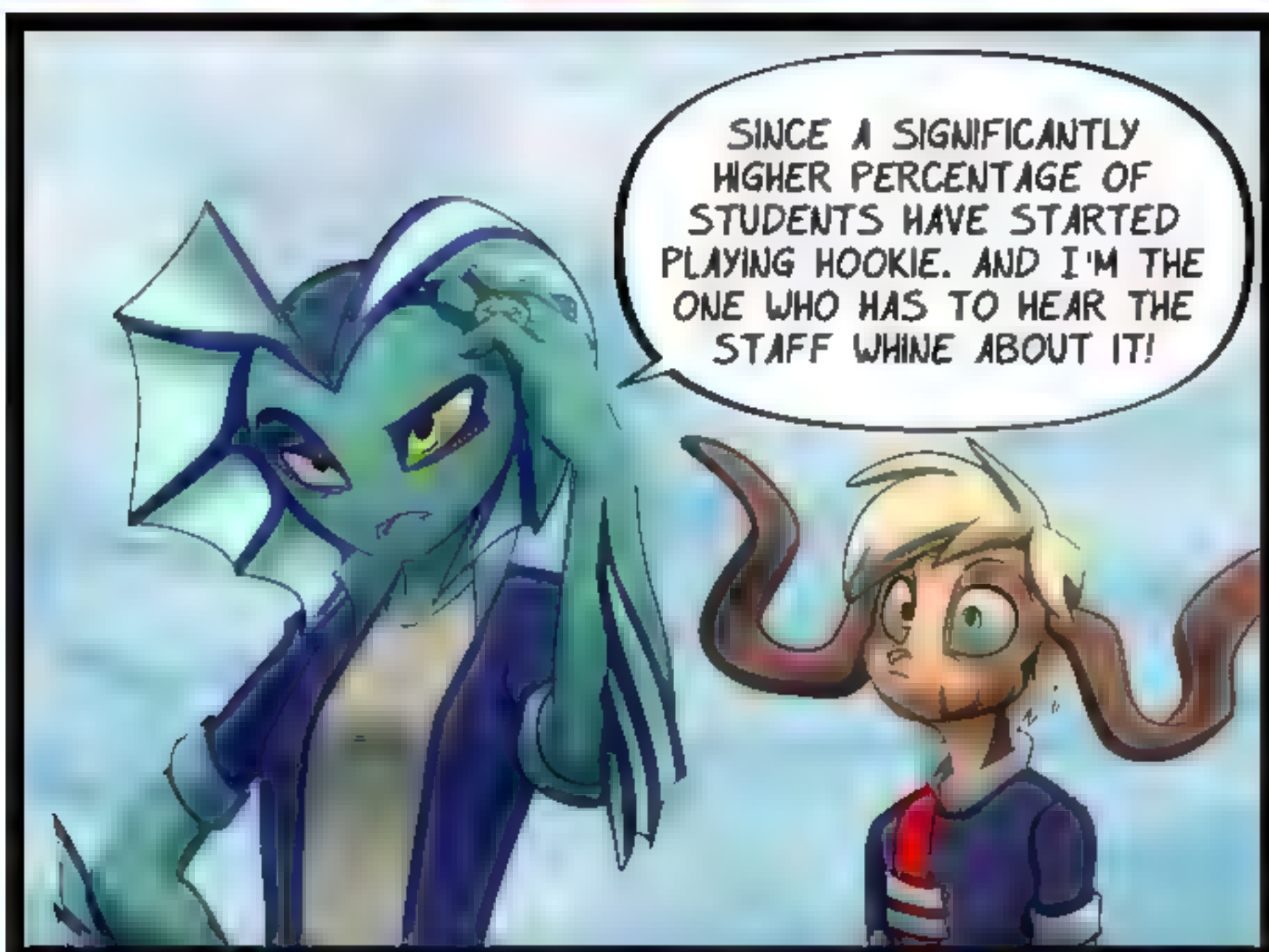
NAH, JUST
THOSE TWO.

I COULDN'T
REALLY EXPLAIN
IT BUT THEY'RE...
EXEPTIONS.

AND THEY
APPARENTLY
GET TO FLING
CRUMBS INTO
MY HAIR.











WATCH ME.

YOINK!



WHAT'S THIS?
AL'S PHONE? OOOH,
AND IT'S GOT THE
ATTENDANCE LOGS
ON IT, TOO!

BOOP.

FILE SENT.



NOW I'LL
JUST ASK Z FOR
SOME SURVEILLANCE
EQUIPMENT...

Y'KNOW, TO
PRACTICE MY
RECON SKILLS.

...DID YOU
REALLY JUST USE
MY PHONE TO SEND
YOURSELF PRIVILEGED
DOCUMENTS?

AND SCRUBBED
THE TRACKING LOGS
LIKE YOU SHOWED ME,
DON'T WORRY.

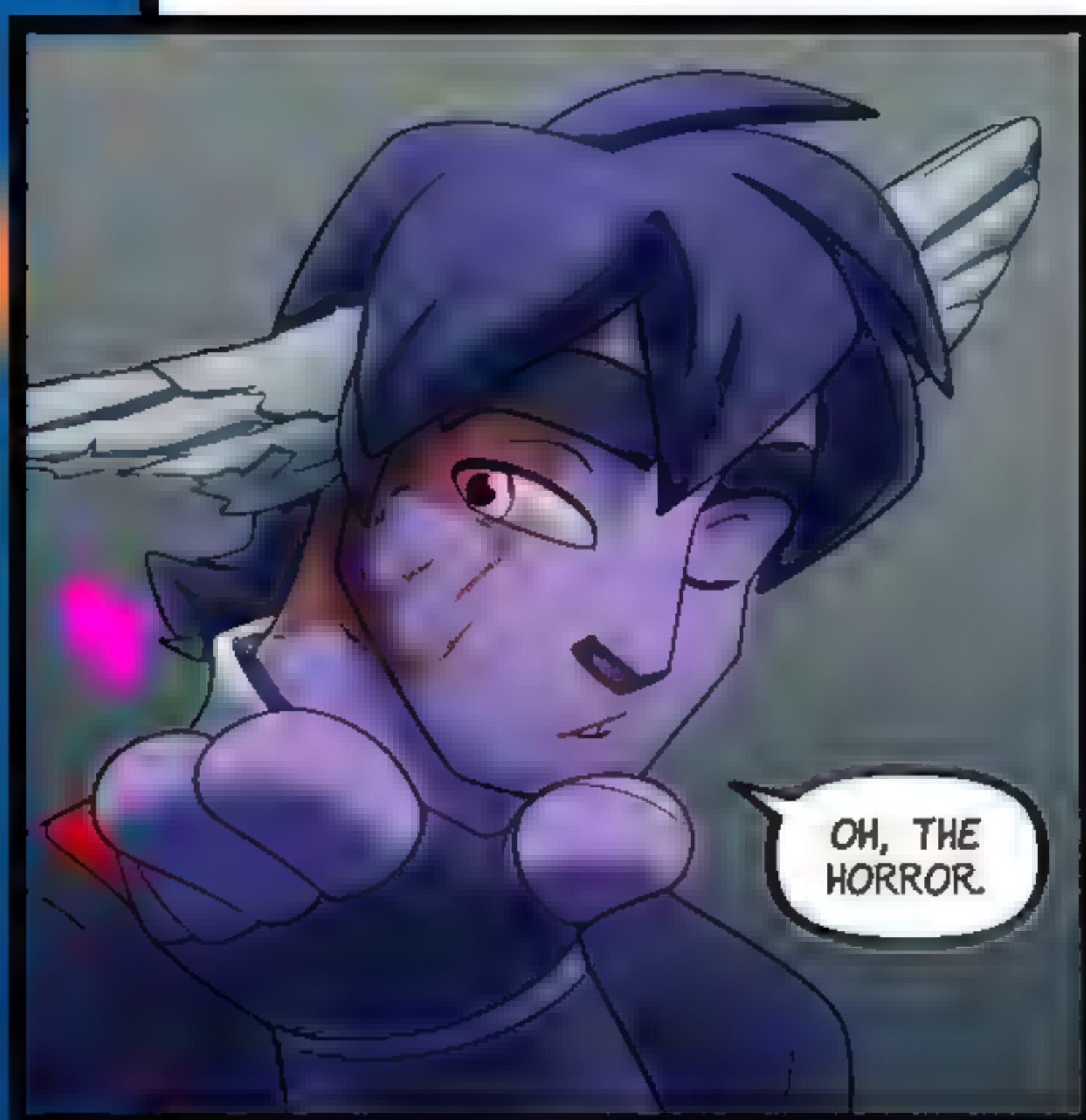
SO NOT
THE POINT,
BUT OKAY.



AND OZ--
GET BACK TO
CLASS, ALRIGHT?

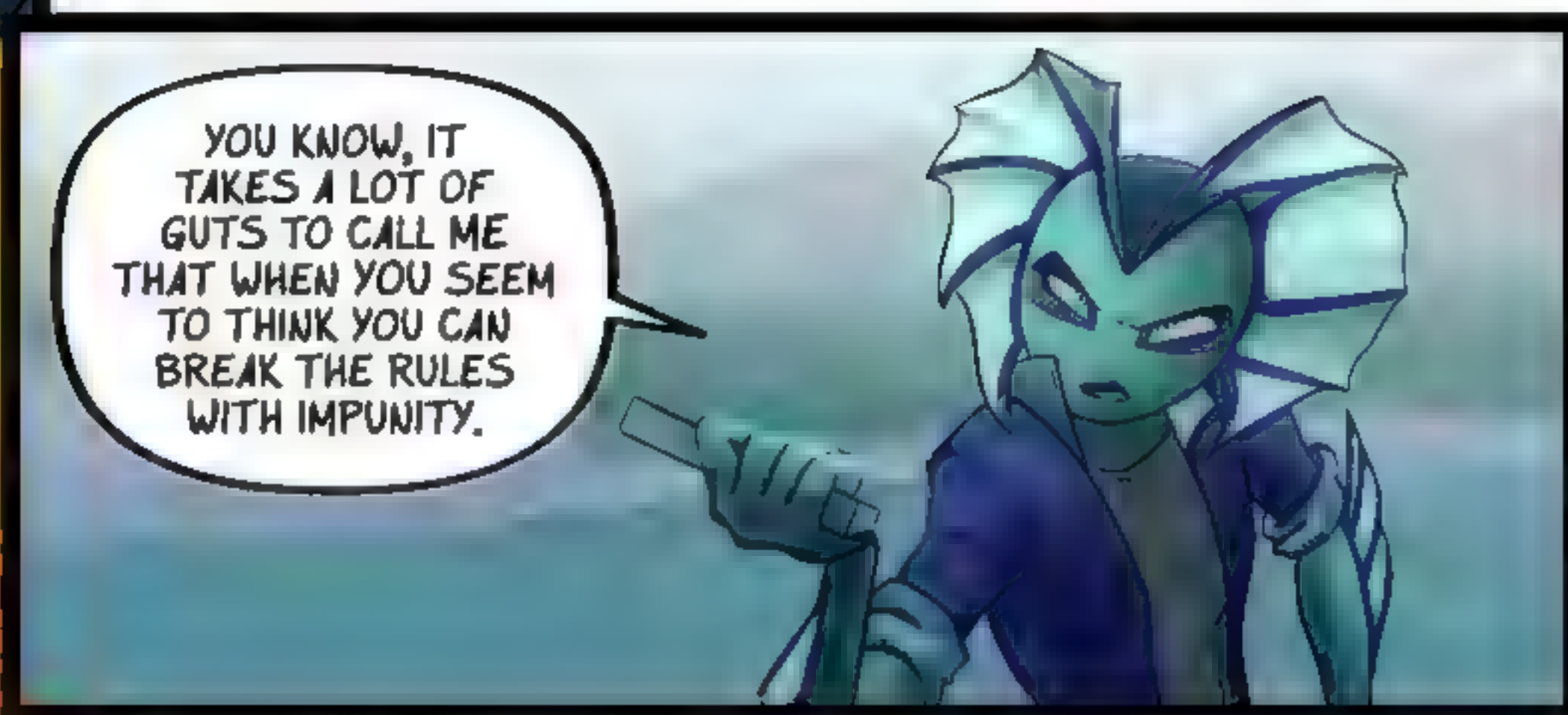
OR YOU'LL FIND
YOURSELF ON THE
PUNCHY END OF
MY FISTI!

BE. AFRAID.



OH, THE
HORROR.







WHERE TO START?
BECAUSE I KNOW
YOU CAN DO BETTER
THAN THIS. BECAUSE
YOU ARE NOT
EVEN TRYING.

BECAUSE I
HATE SEEING YOU
CALL YOURSELF
"TOP FLUNKIE."



BECAUSE YOU'RE
"EVERYONE'S BEST
FRIEND!" AND THE
FIRST YEARS LOOK
UP TO YOU AS A
ROLE MODEL.

YOU HAVE
GOT TO SET A
BETTER EXAMPLE
THAN THAT.



HEY, DON'T
MAKE IT SOUND
LIKE I'M THE "KID
WHISPERER." THEY'RE
GONNA DO DUMB THINGS,
AND THEN THEY'LL
GROW OUT OF IT.

BUT DON'T
THINK CHANGING
THE SUBJECT WILL
MAKE ME UN-NOTICE
THAT SOMETHING'S
BOTHERING YOU.

IF YOU
DON'T WANT TO
TALK ABOUT IT,
THAT'S COOL,
BUT--



--UH,
HEADS UP.

WHAT?



UGH...
JOY.



CRAP. OZ,
GET GOING BEFORE
YOU'RE CAUGHT
IN THE BLAST
OF IDIOCY.

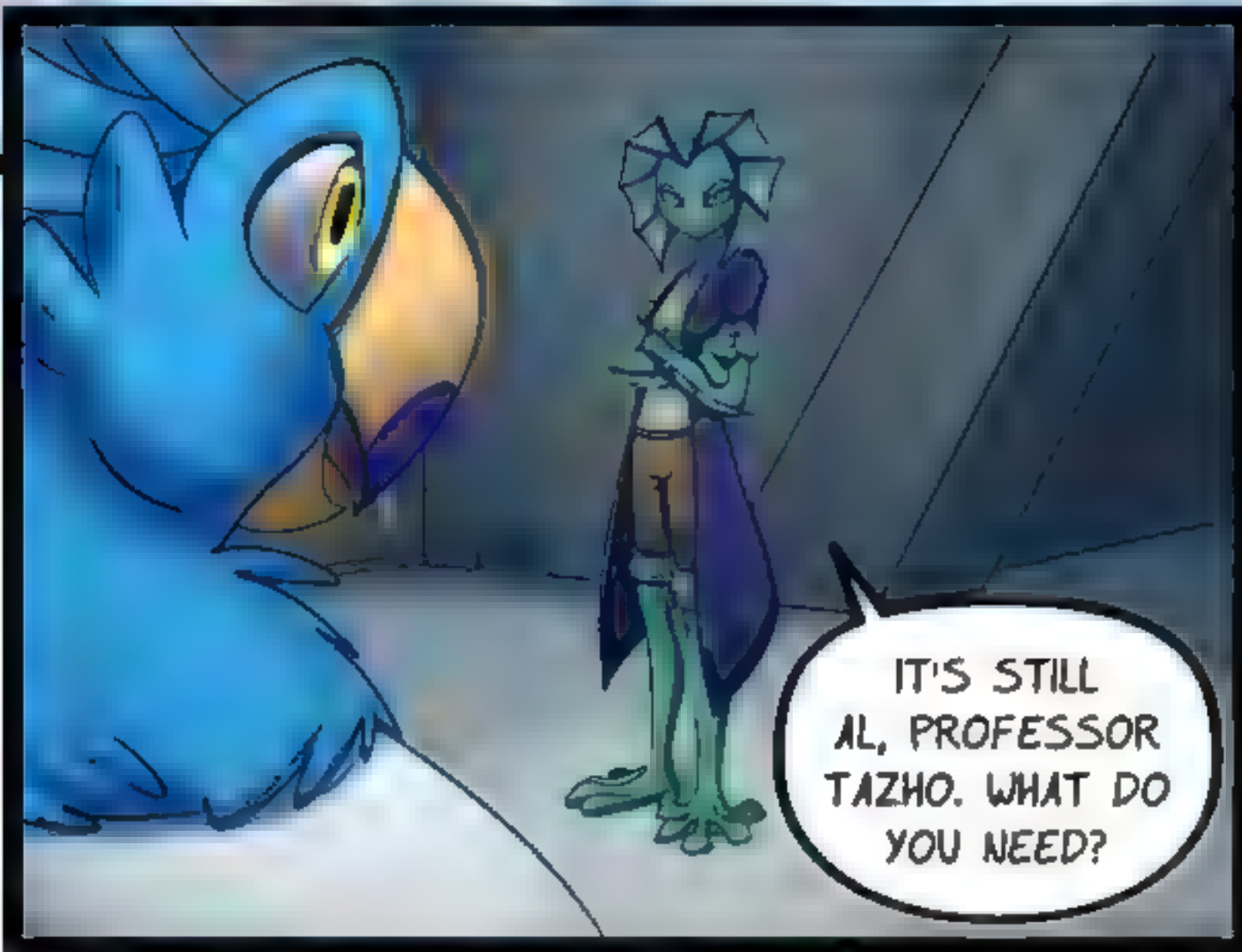


REALLY? IT'S
ONLY TAZHO,
WHY--

HE'LL GIVE YOU
DETENTION!
GO!!



ALLIE, THERE
YOU ARE! GOOD
MORNING!
I'VE BEEN
LOOKING HIGH AND
LOW FOR YOU--
GOT A MINUTE?



IT'S STILL
AL, PROFESSOR
TAZHO. WHAT DO
YOU NEED?



RIGHT-O,
SORRY.

BUT I'VE
GOT A SURPRISE
FOR YOU: A REAL
MISSION!

SEE, THERE WAS
A BIT OF A HICCUP
IN ADMINISTRATION.

OF
COURSE.

YUP.

YEESH...

THE KASTINA
BOARD OF EDUCATIONAL
COMPLIANCE JUST SENT
THIS YEAR'S ACADEMIC
INSPECTOR, AND, UH...

UH-HUH.

THIS ONE'S
A REAL **BONAFIDE**
INSPECTOR.

FIGURES.



AS IN, NOT
ONE OF THE
HEADMASTER'S
COVERT AGENTS.

GO TO CLASS,
FLUFFBUCKET
>=[

AND IF SHE FINDS
OUT ABOUT THE, AHM,
"UNSANCTIONED" BITS OF
OUR CURRICULUM... THAT
COULD BE BAD.

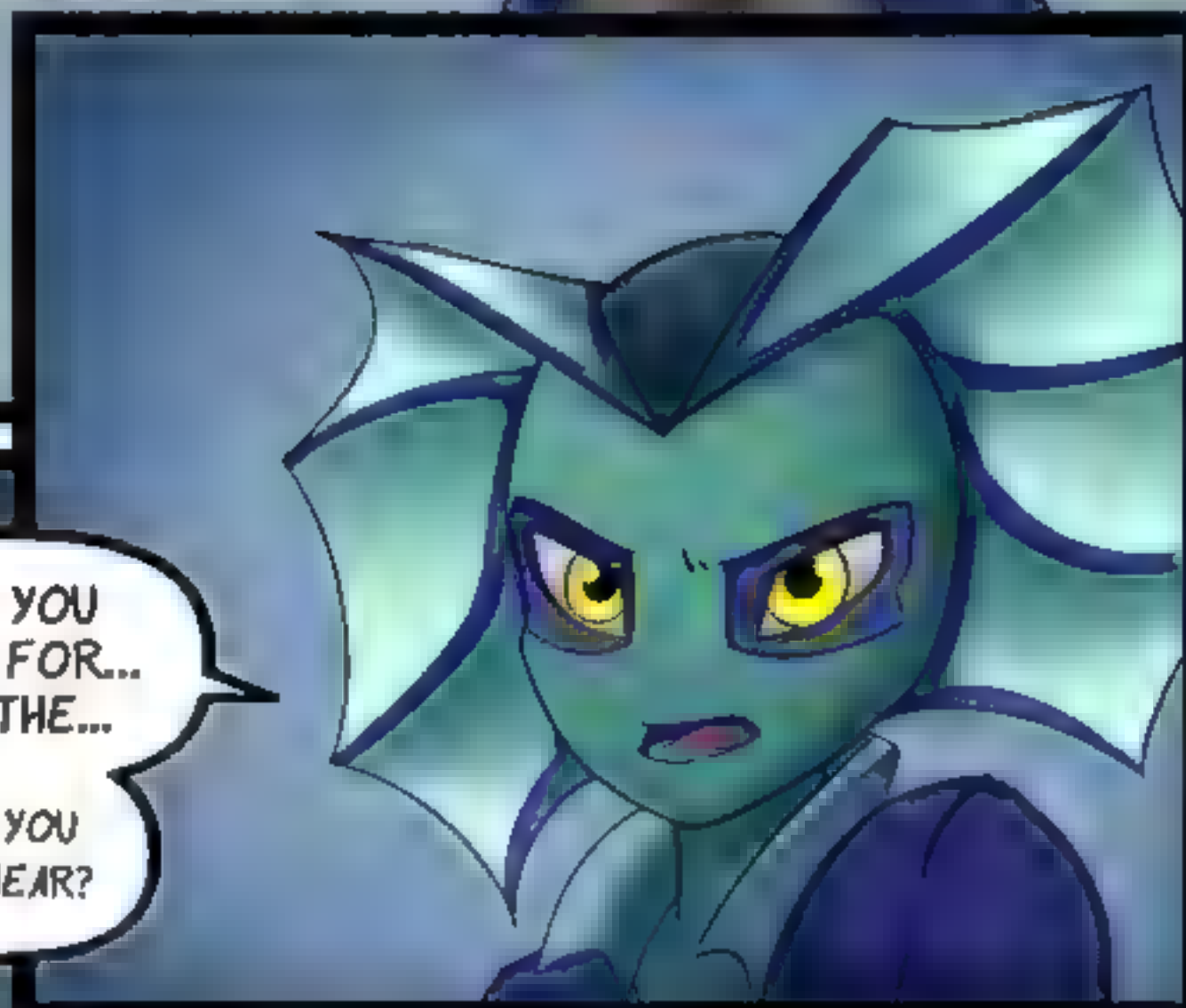
SO WE NEED
SOMEONE TO POSE
AS HER ASSISTANT!

AND YOU KNOW
WHAT I SAID? I
TOLD 'EM YOU'D BE
PERFECT FOR
THE JOB!

YES SIR,
BABYSIT THE
TOURIST.

GOT IT.

...WELL, YEAH.
BUT IT SOUNDS
COOLER THE WAY
I SAID IT.



UGH...
ALRIGHT,
LOOK.

DURING FINALS
THIS PAST TERM,
MY SQUAD HAD THE
USUAL WAR SIM
EXAM, RIGHT?



WE DIVIDED INTO
TWO TEAMS.

ABOUT AN HOUR INTO IT,
I MISCALCULATED, AND WE
LOST A STRONG UNIT TO
THE OPPOSING FORCE.

OUCH, THAT
WAS ONE OF
AL'S SHOCK
TROOPS!

...HOLY
CARP.

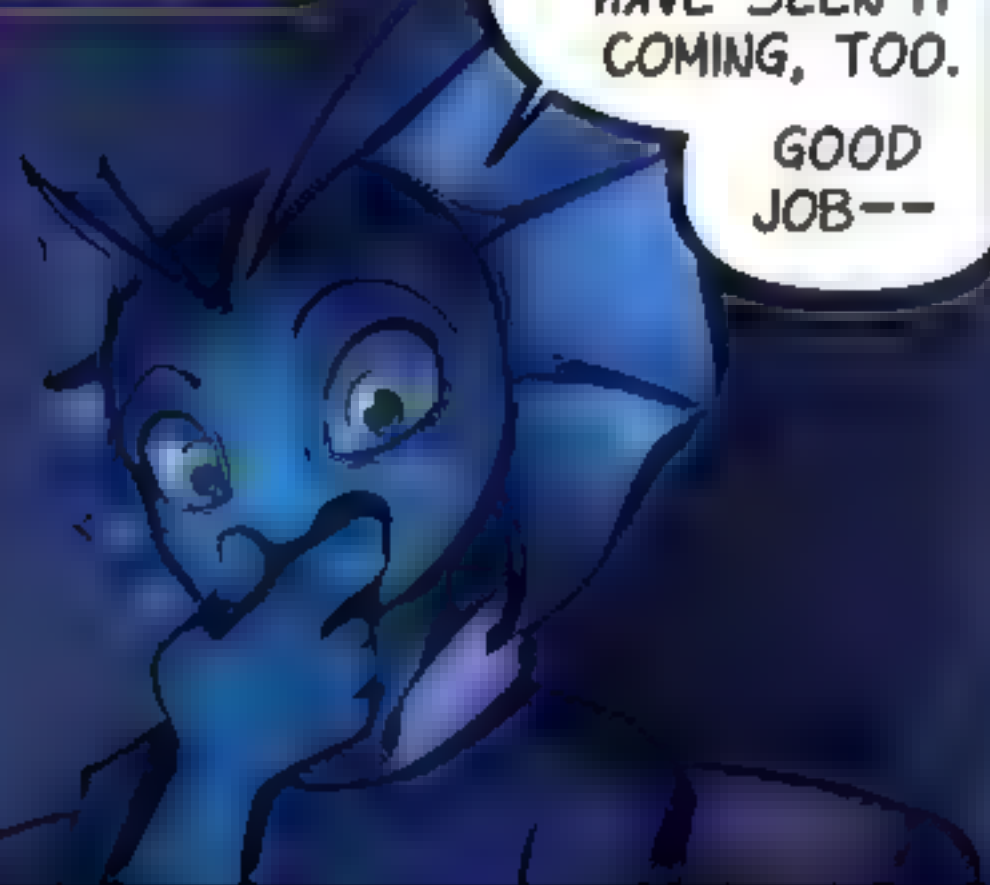
NORMALLY I WOULD HAVE
BEEN IMPRESSED. GRATEFUL
FOR A CHALLENGE, EVEN.

NO
WAY!

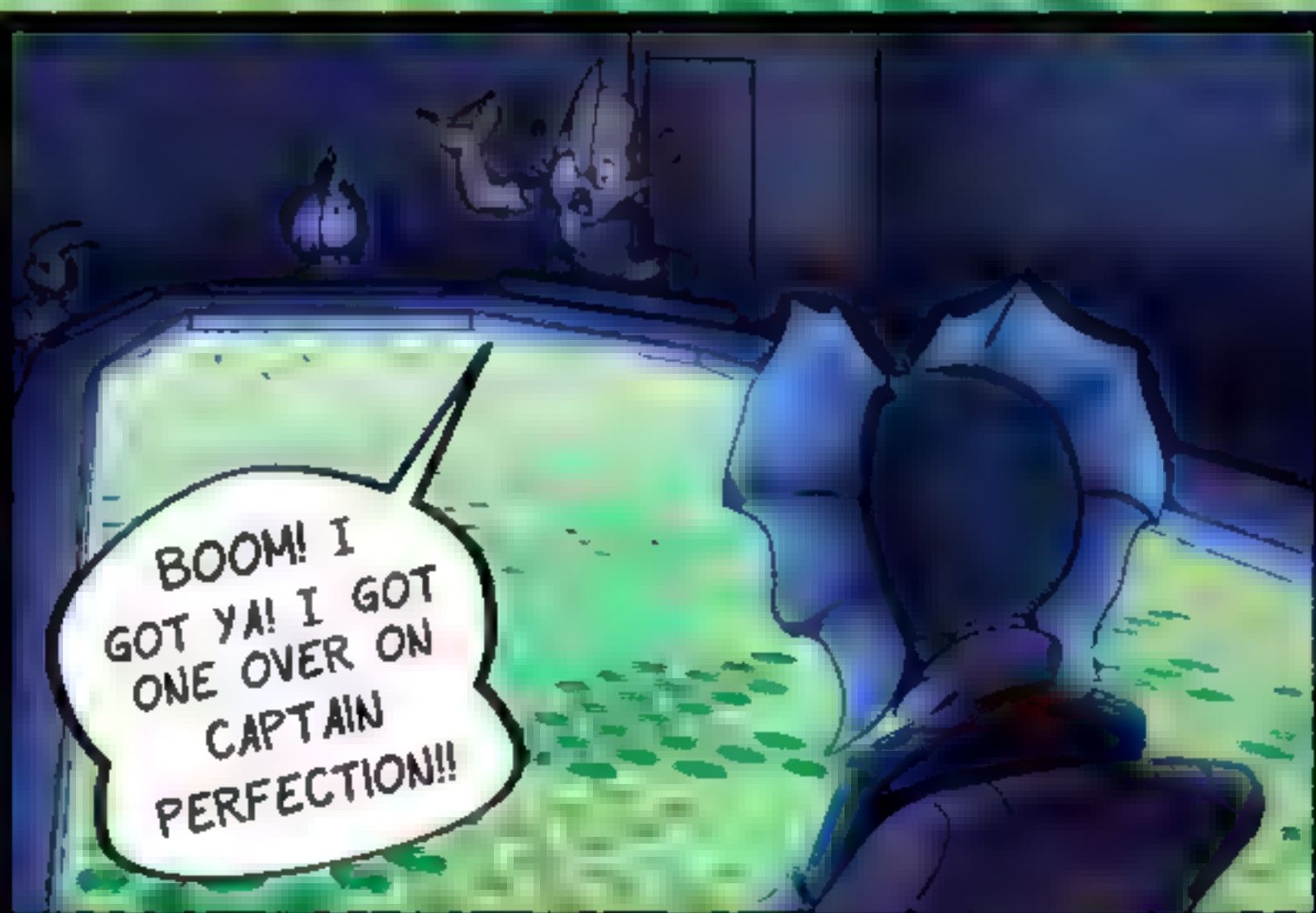
BUT THEN...

...HUH. CLEVER
SETUP. SHOULD
HAVE SEEN IT
COMING, TOO.

GOOD
JOB--



BOOM! I
GOT YA! I GOT
ONE OVER ON
CAPTAIN
PERFECTION!!

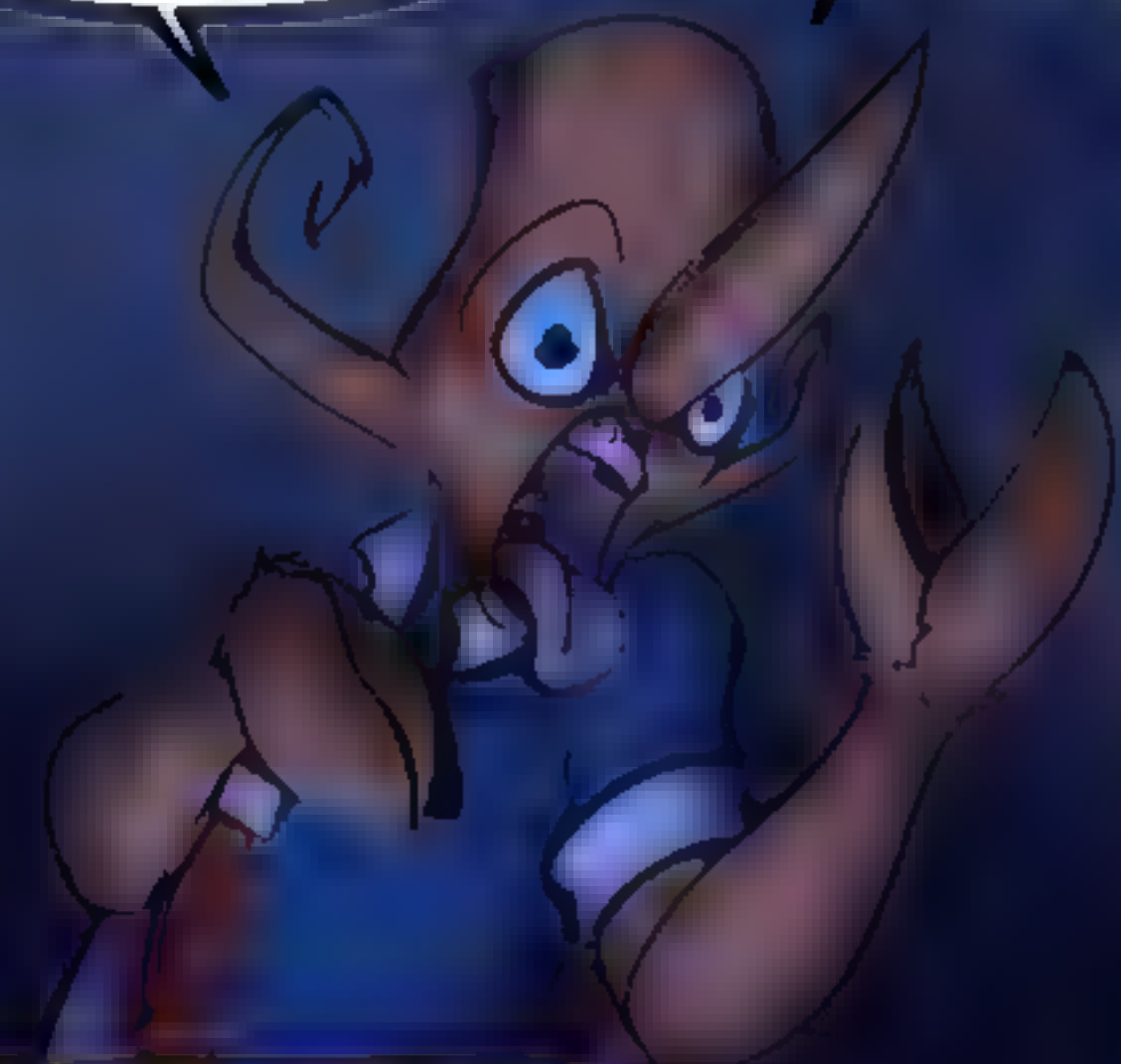


NYEEH-NYEEH,
I'VE GOT ONE ON
YOU FOREVER!

FOREVERRR

OKAY THAT'S AN
EXAGGERATION, THEY
WEREN'T QUITE THAT
OBNOXIOUS.

BUT STILL.



I HATE GLOATING.



STORM THREE,
REROUTE AND
PIN DOWN UNITS
DEFENDING BASE
TUGTANUM.

STORM TWO,
CIRCLE EAST AND
PUNCH THROUGH THEIR
EXPOSED FLANK.

STORM ONE--
THAT CHOKEPOINT
IS THEIR ONLY
ESCAPE ROUTE.
CAPTURE IT.

ALL UNITS,
DEPLOY WAR
KITES.

AFFIRMATIVE.

I SHATTERED THEIR
FRONT LINES AND
KEPT THEIR BASE
UNDER SEIGE.

WHITTLED AWAY AT
THEIR RESERVE UNITS.
SABOTAGED LOCAL
RESOURCES. CUT
OFF SUPPLY LINES.

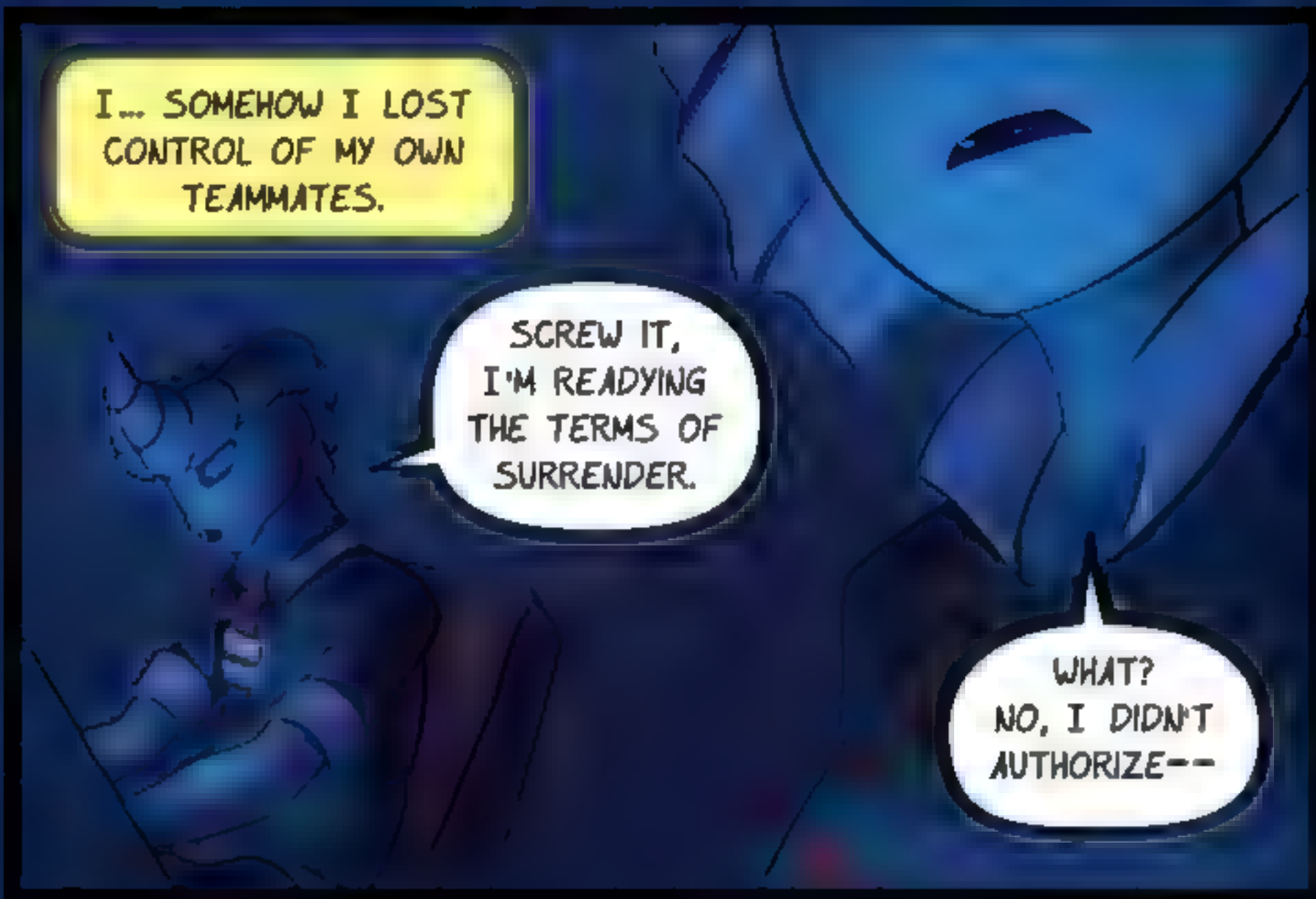
I STARVED THEIR
ARMY TO DEATH, AND
CRUSHED THEIR TEAM'S
EFFORTS TO SAVE
THEIR PEOPLE.

AND WITHIN A
FEW HOURS... I
DON'T KNOW.
SOMETHING
CHANGED.

THEY'RE NOT
COMING BACK
FROM THIS.

PERMISSION
TO DISENGAGE
AND CONCENTRATE
ON REMAINING
ENEMY FORCES?

DENIED.



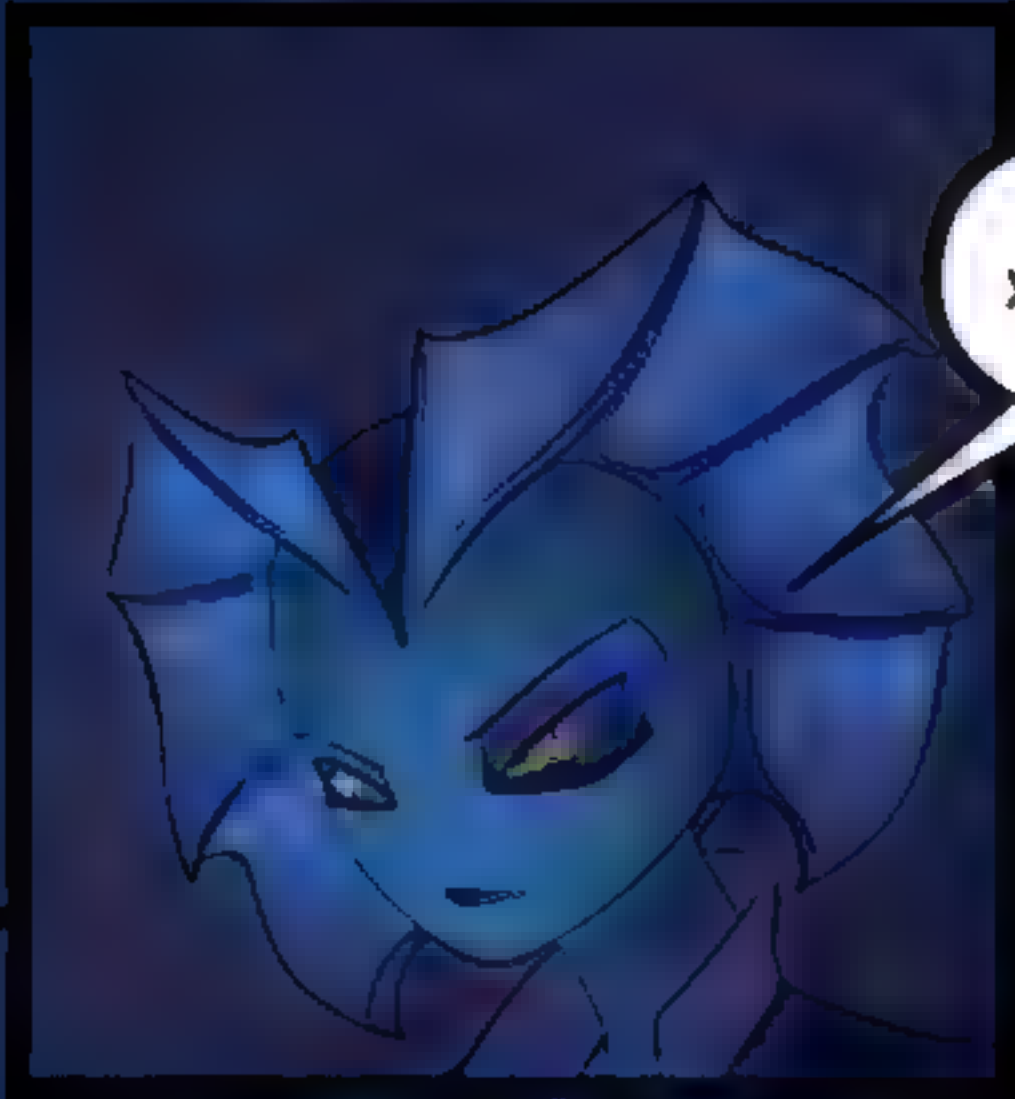
I... SOMEHOW I LOST CONTROL OF MY OWN TEAMMATES.

SCREW IT, I'M READYING THE TERMS OF SURRENDER.

WHAT? NO, I DIDN'T AUTHORIZE--



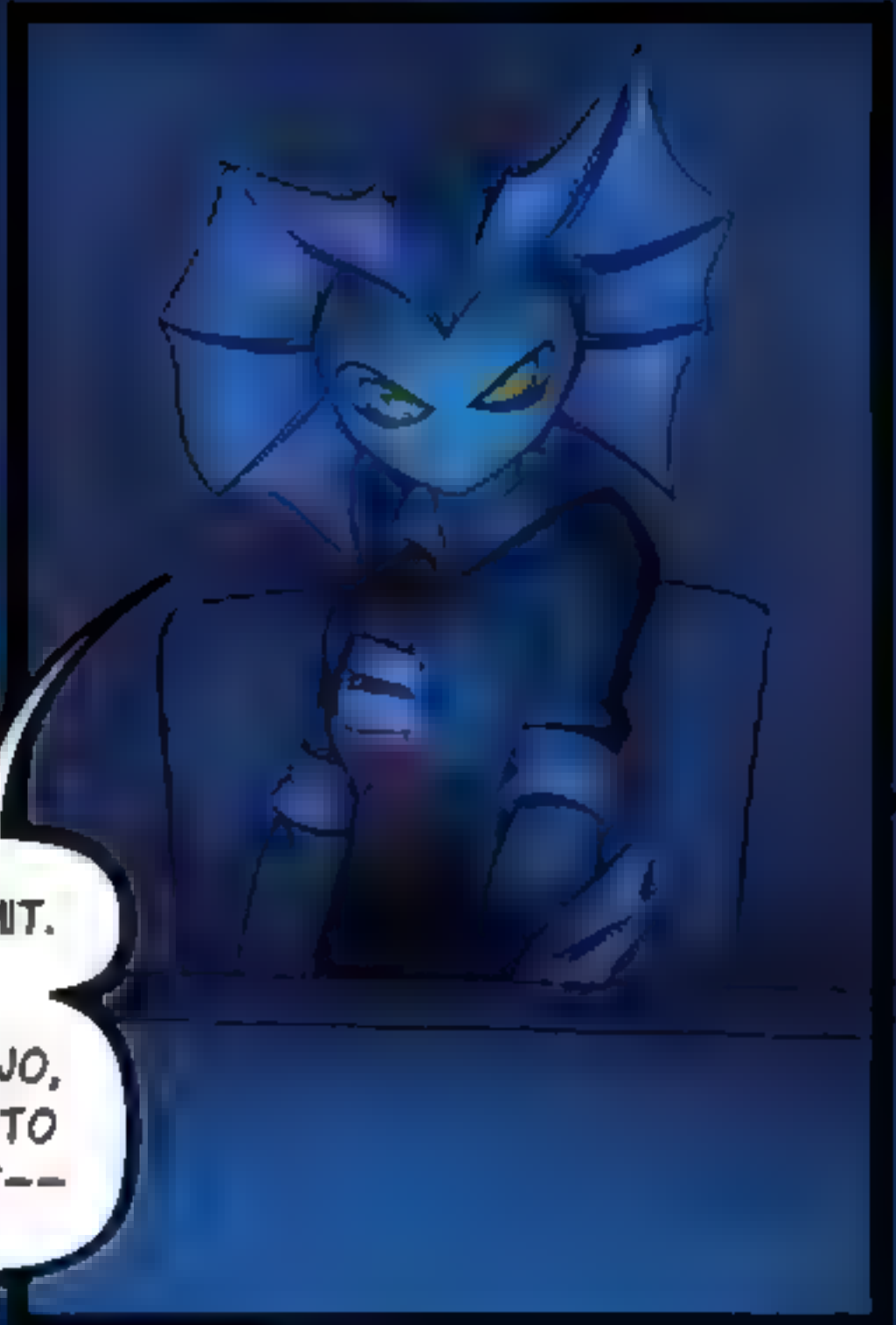
THEN GET AUTHORIZING, AL. WE'RE SICK OF TORTURING THEM AND WE WANT TO GO HOME SOME TIME THIS CENTURY.



ZNAK, DON'T YOU DARE SEND THAT TO--



DAMMIT. STORM TWO, PREPARE TO INTERCEPT--



NO CAN DO, COMMANDER.

...SORRY.

SERIOUSLY, THIS HAS GONE ON LONG ENOUGH. I CAN'T.

I CAN'T JUST-- I COULDN'T LET THEM WALK ALL OVER ME LIKE THAT. THERE HAVE TO BE CONSEQUENCES FOR DOUBLE-CROSSING ME. ALWAYS.

SO I TOOK DECISIVE ACTION.

IT TURNED INTO FIVE AGAINST ONE, WITH MY TEAMMATES DESERTING ME...

IN THE END, I WIPED THEM ALL OFF THE MAP.

KHEIL THOUGHT THE WHOLE THING WAS A GREAT SHOW, OF COURSE-- BUT THAT'S ALL THIS IS TO HER.

JUST A GAME, WITH WINNERS AND SORE LOSERS.

BUT THE OTHER STUDENTS? THEY WON'T LOOK AT ME, WON'T TALK TO ME -- THEY MOVE AWAY FROM ME WHEN I WALK PAST THEM.

EVEN THE STAFF GIVE ME THESE WEIRD LOOKS WHEN THEY THINK I'M NOT WATCHING.

I'VE BURNED MY BRIDGES, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE I COULD HAVE DONE.



AND YOU THINK THIS ASSIGNMENT IS PUNISHMENT.

WELL, YEAH. YOU'RE UNDERMINING MY POSITION WITH FUTURE SUBORDINATES ON THE PRETENSE OF SOME OFFICE-DWELLING SNOOP NEEDING A STUDENT CHAPERONE.

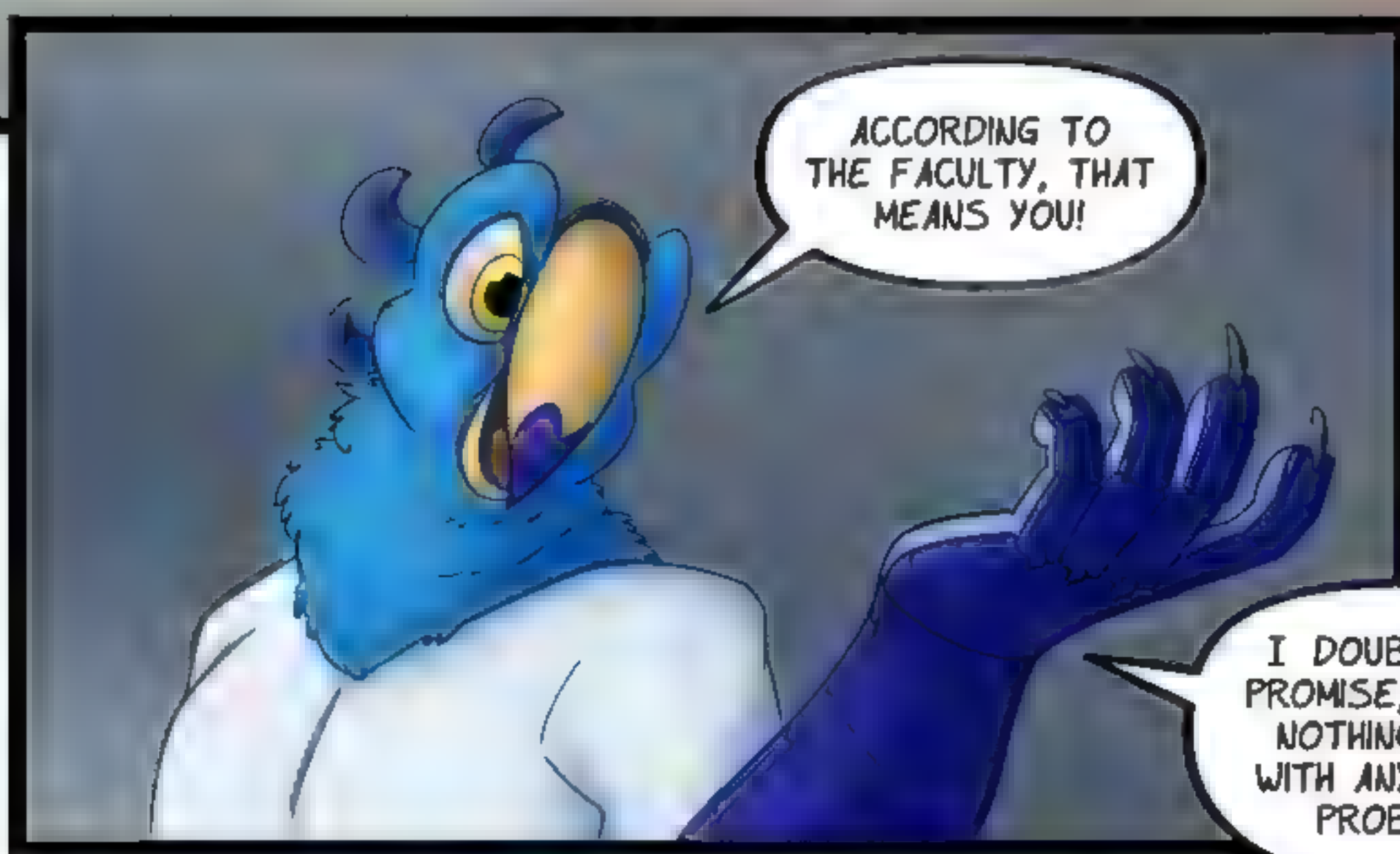
NO, NO, THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL! THE HEADMASTER'S TAKING NO CHANCES WITH THIS LADY--

SHE'S AN UNKNOWN VARIETY.

...YOU MEAN "VARIABLE."

YISS!

SEE? YOU'RE SHARP AS A TACK. AND WITH STAKES THIS HIGH, WE NEED OUR BEST PEOPLE ON THE CASE.



ACCORDING TO THE FACULTY, THAT MEANS YOU!



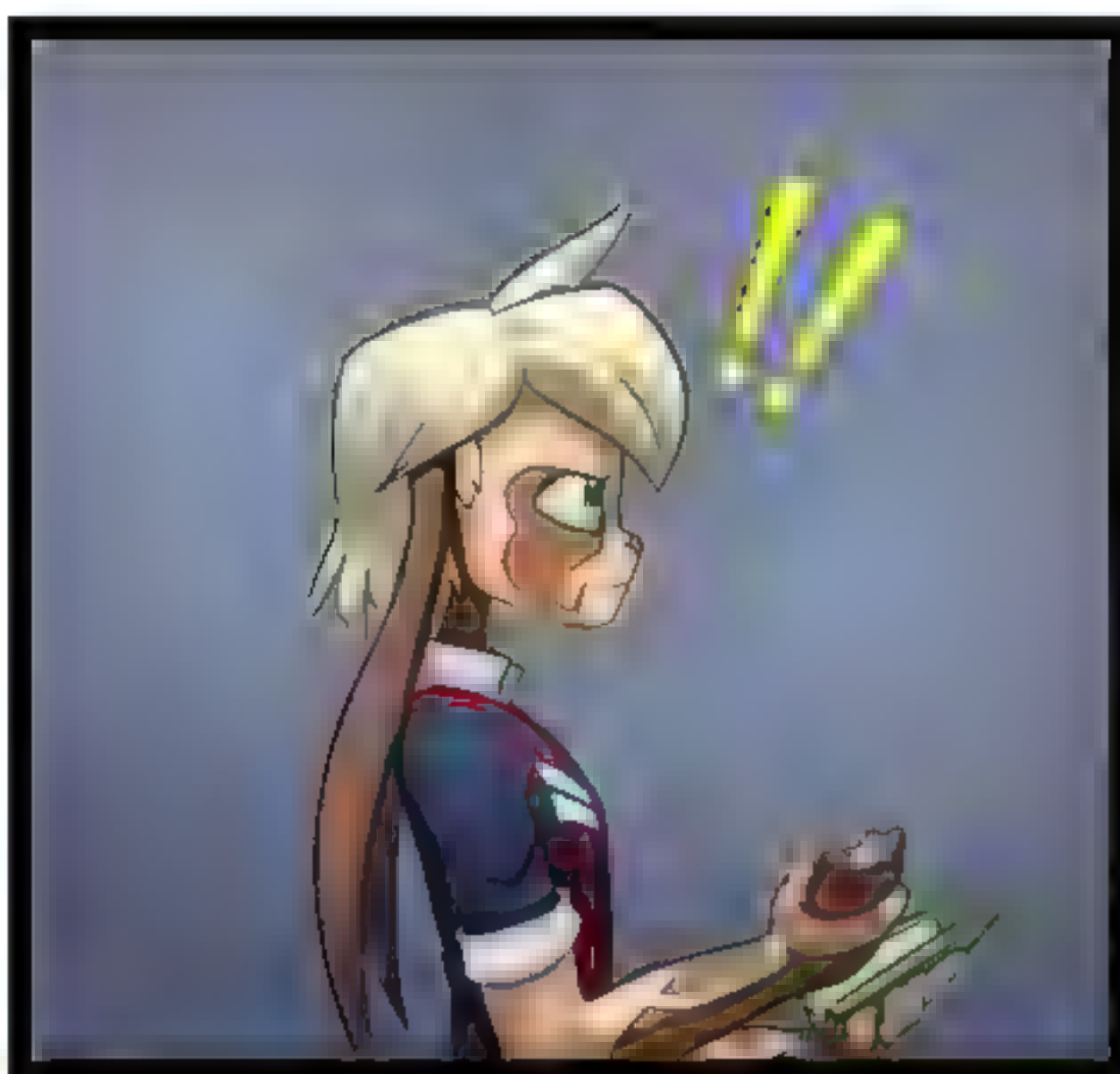
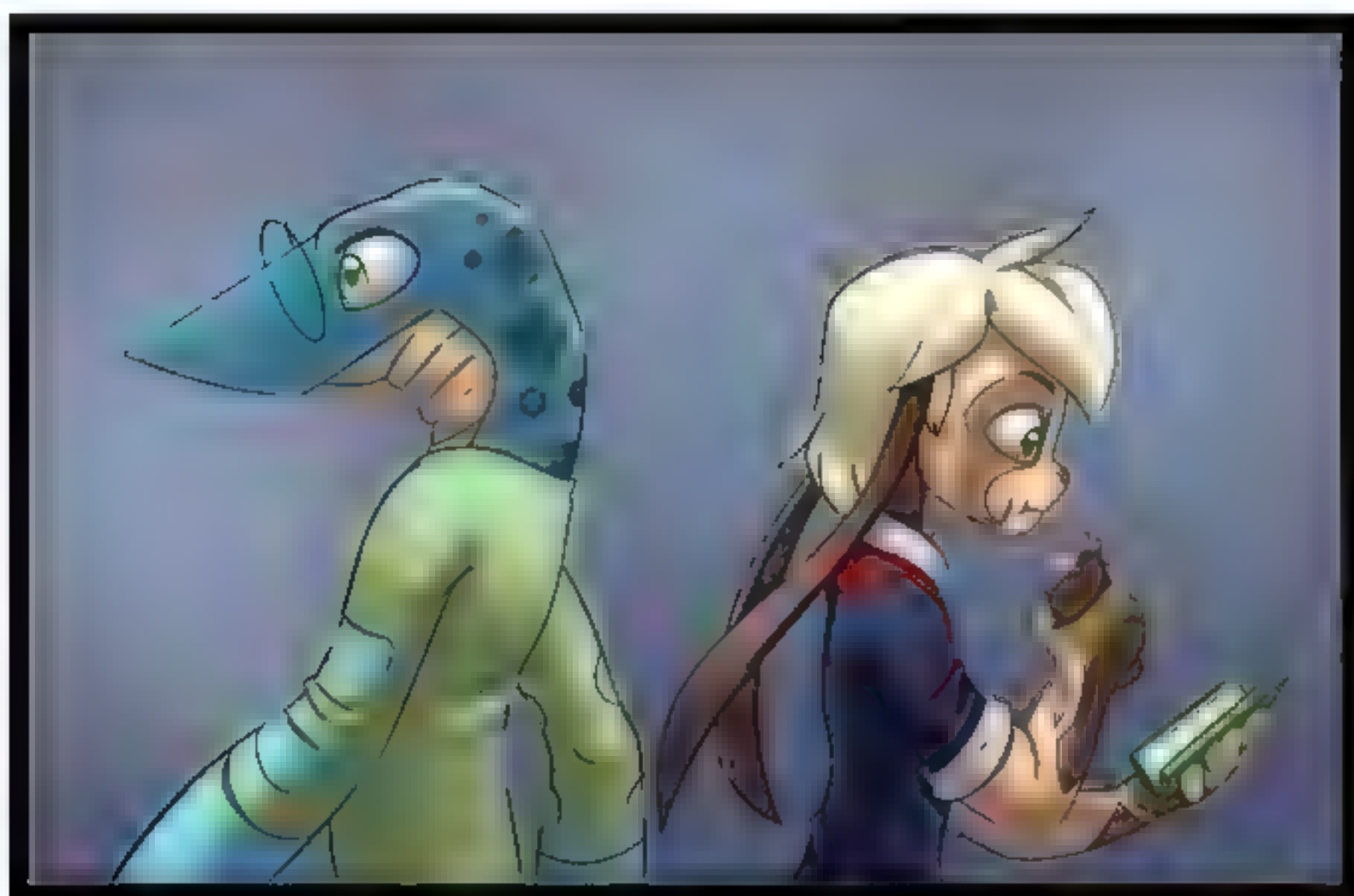
I DOUBLE-PINKY PROMISE, THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY KIND OF PROBATION.



BESIDES, YOU'LL LOVE MS. LOKSAN! SHE'S SO SWEET IT'LL GIVE YOU THE JIBBLIES.

...UH.

IF "JIBBLIES" IS SOME KIND OF NEURAL PATHOGEN, THAT WOULD EXPLAIN A LOT.





SILENCE!

I'M ASKING
THE QUESTIONS!

BUT WHY DID
YOU JUST--

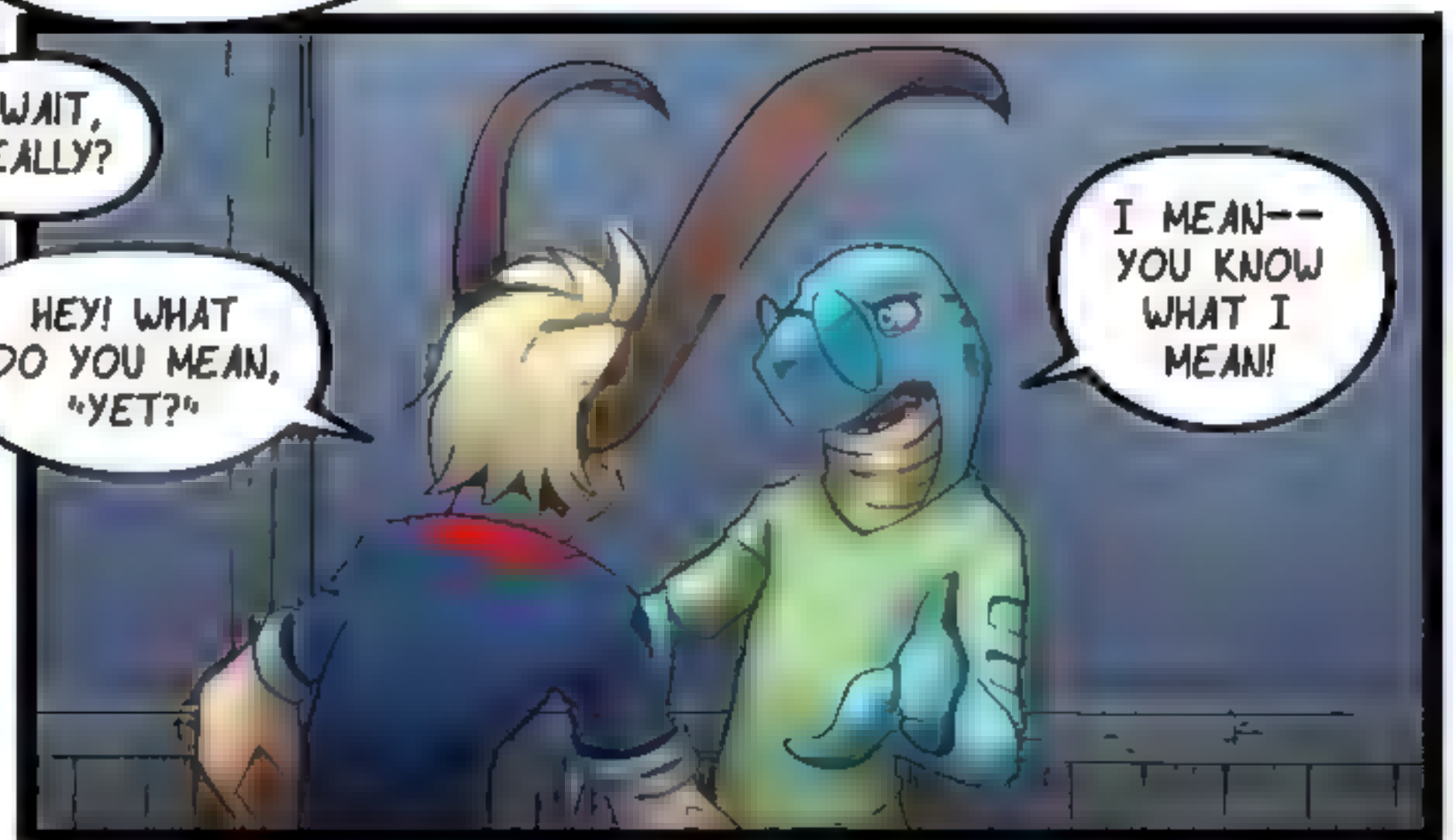
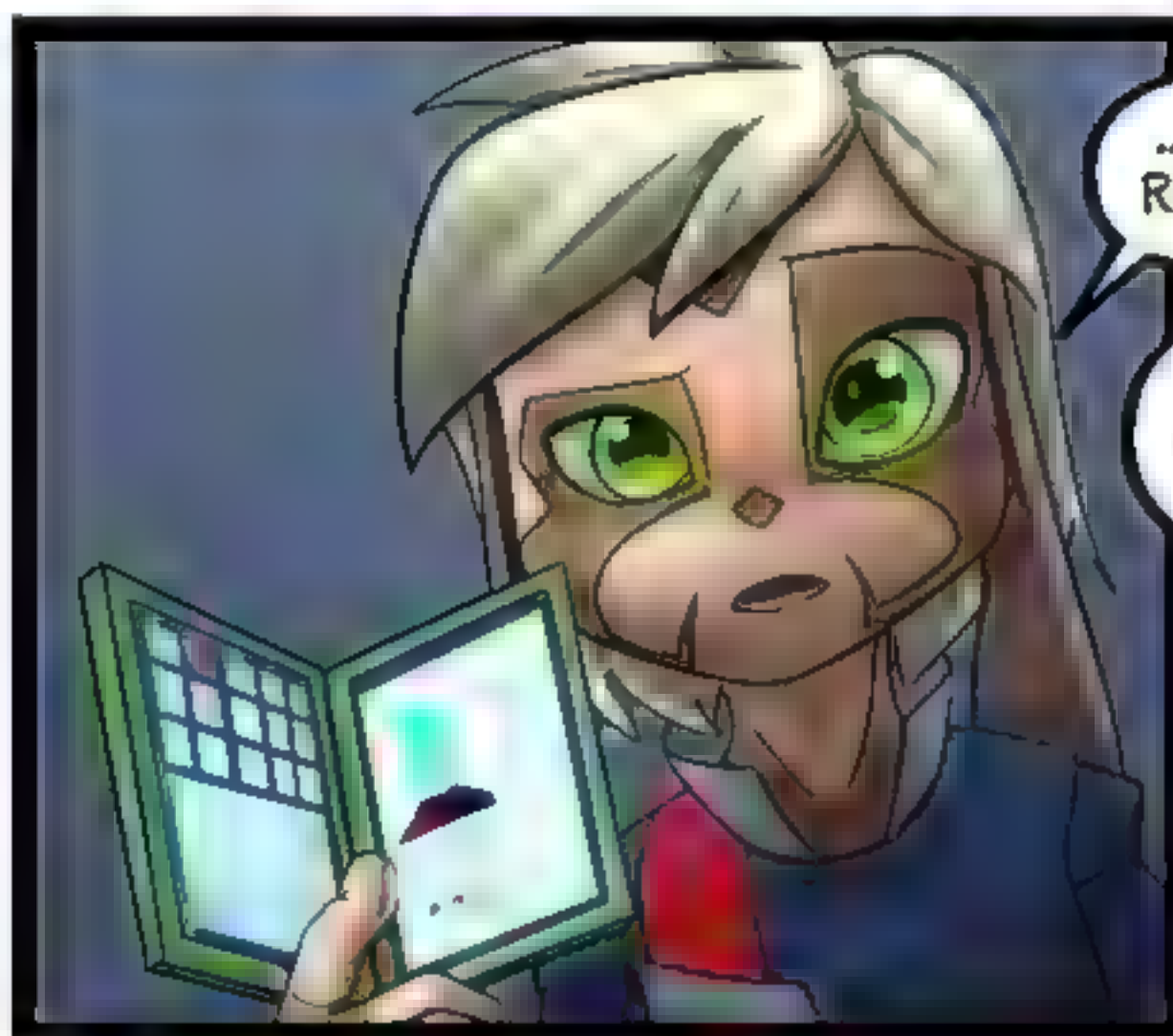
BECAUSE I
DID! I'M KHEIL
NAZURET, I DO
WHAT I WANT!
SHADDUP!

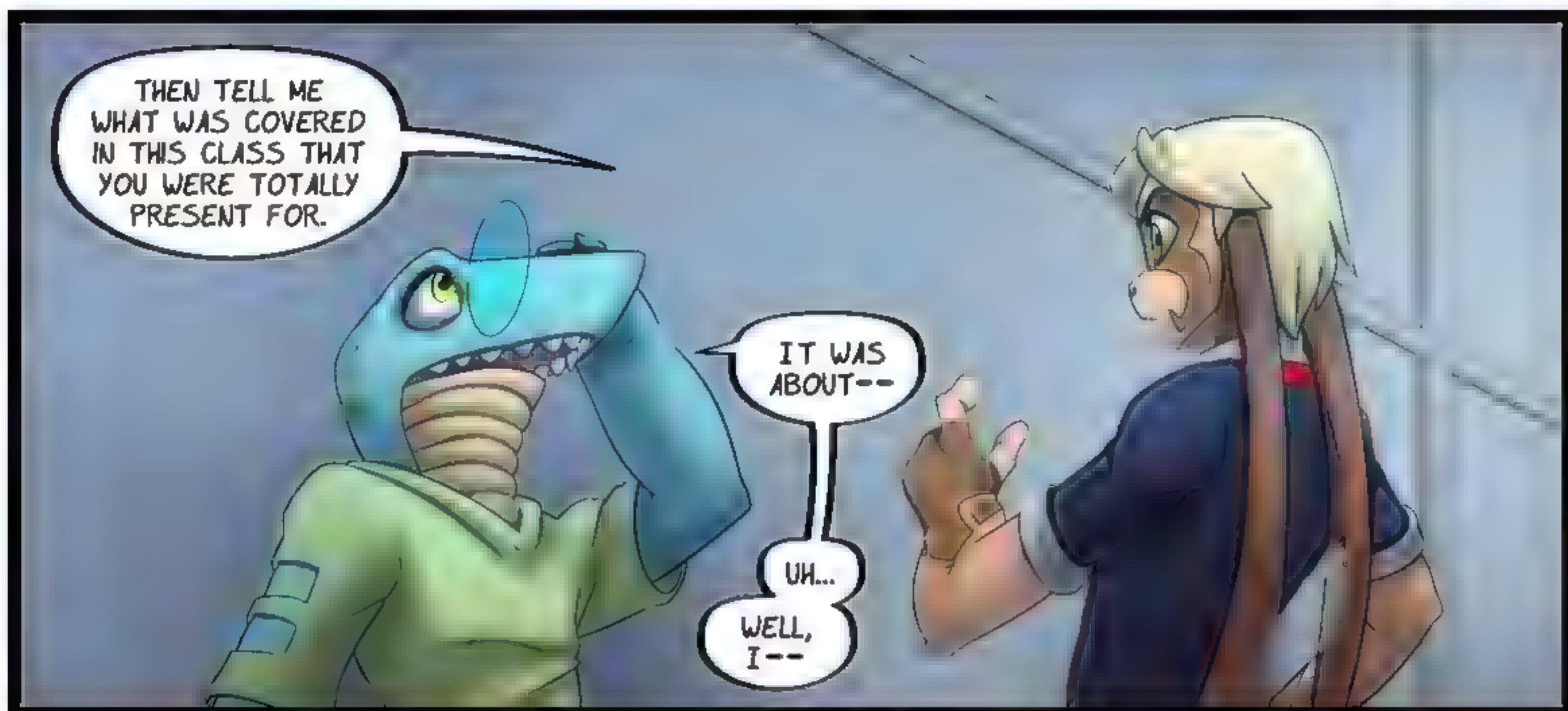
WE'RE HERE
TO DISCUSS YOUR
ATTENDANCE RECORD,
NOT MY CREAM ROLL.

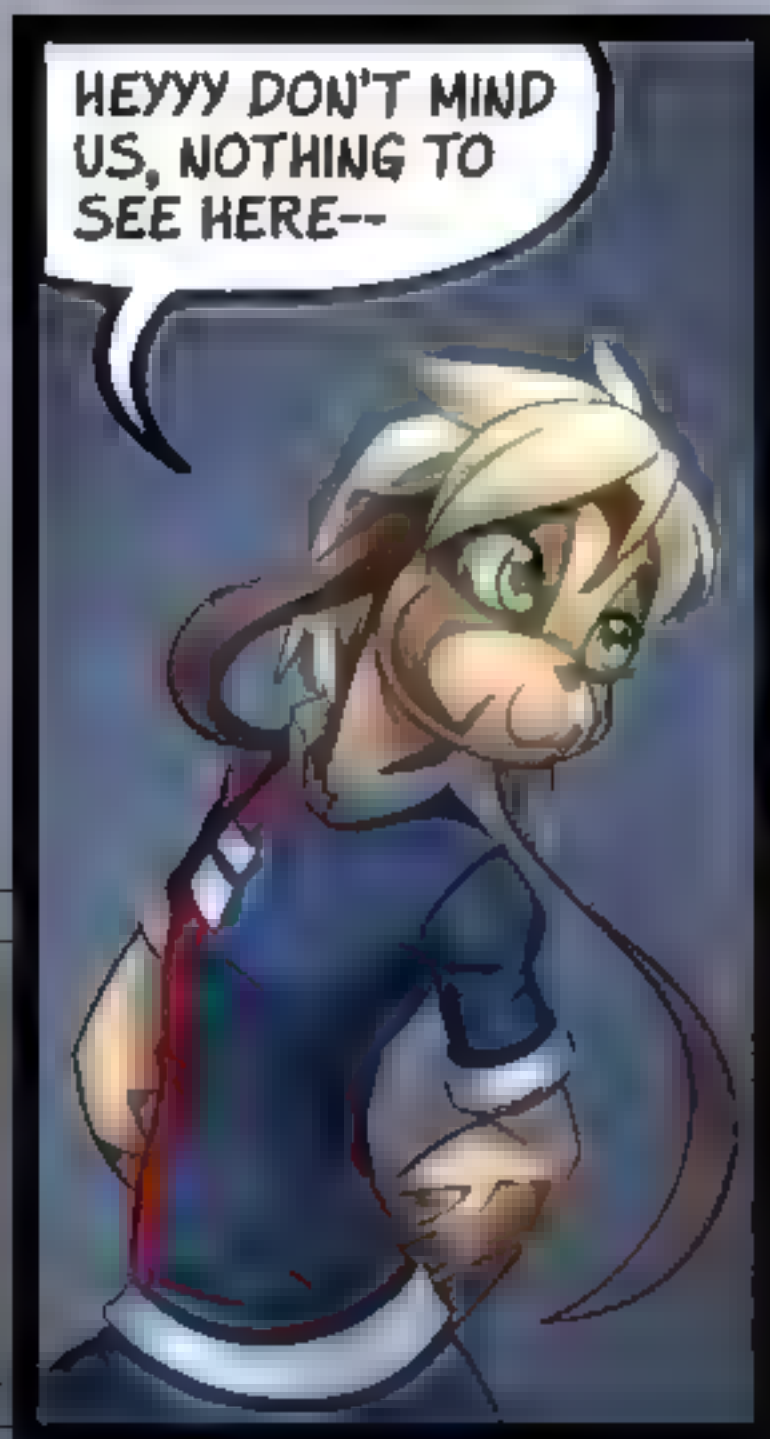
OH. WOW
OKAY. UM...

C-CAN I
HELP YOU?

YES. I
HAVE ONE
QUESTION.







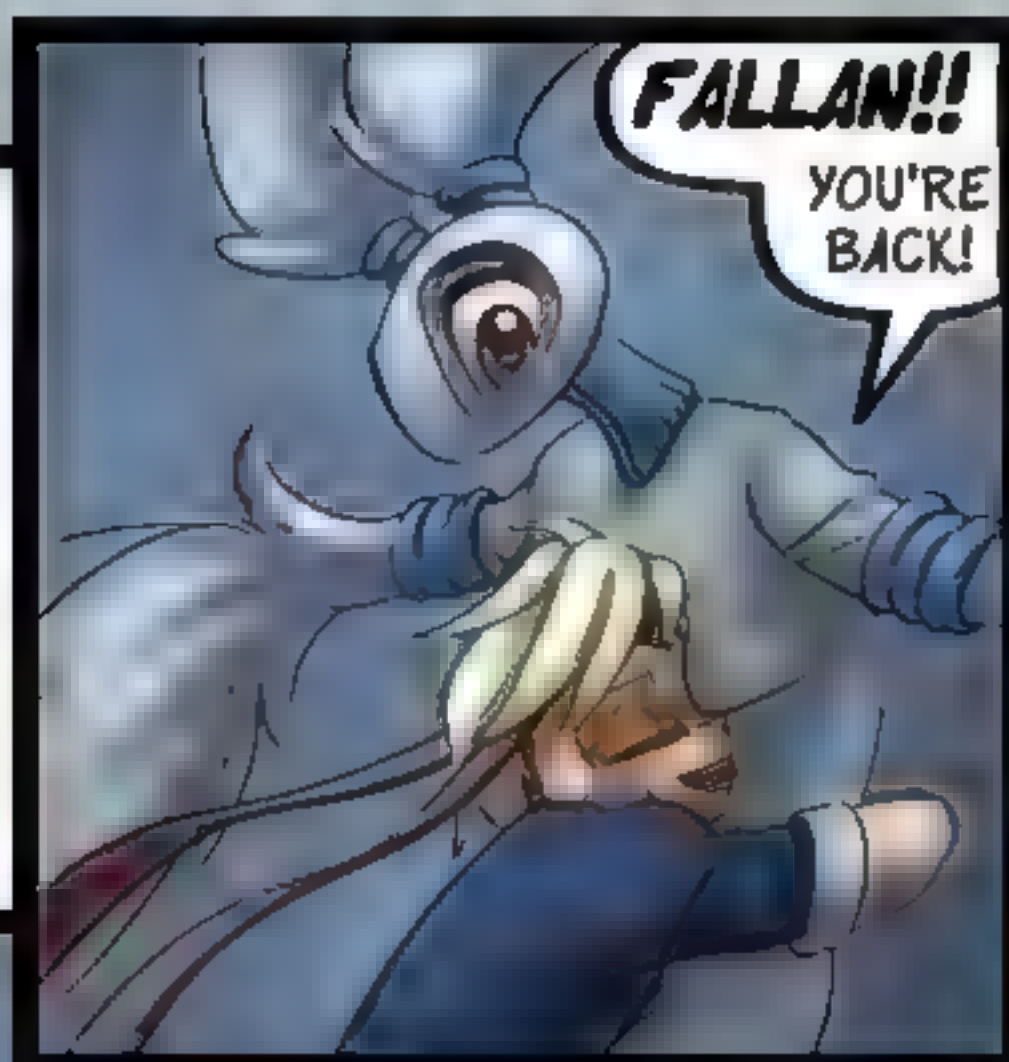
HEYYY DON'T MIND US, NOTHING TO SEE HERE--



...FALLAN?



YUP, THAT'S STILL MY NAME. HEYA, KHEIL!



FALLAN!!
YOU'RE BACK!



WAIT, HOW COME YOU'RE BACK?

OH, JUST IN TOWN FOR THE WEEK, THOUGHT I'D DROP BY AND CATCH UP WITH MY FAVORITE LITTLE SISTER--

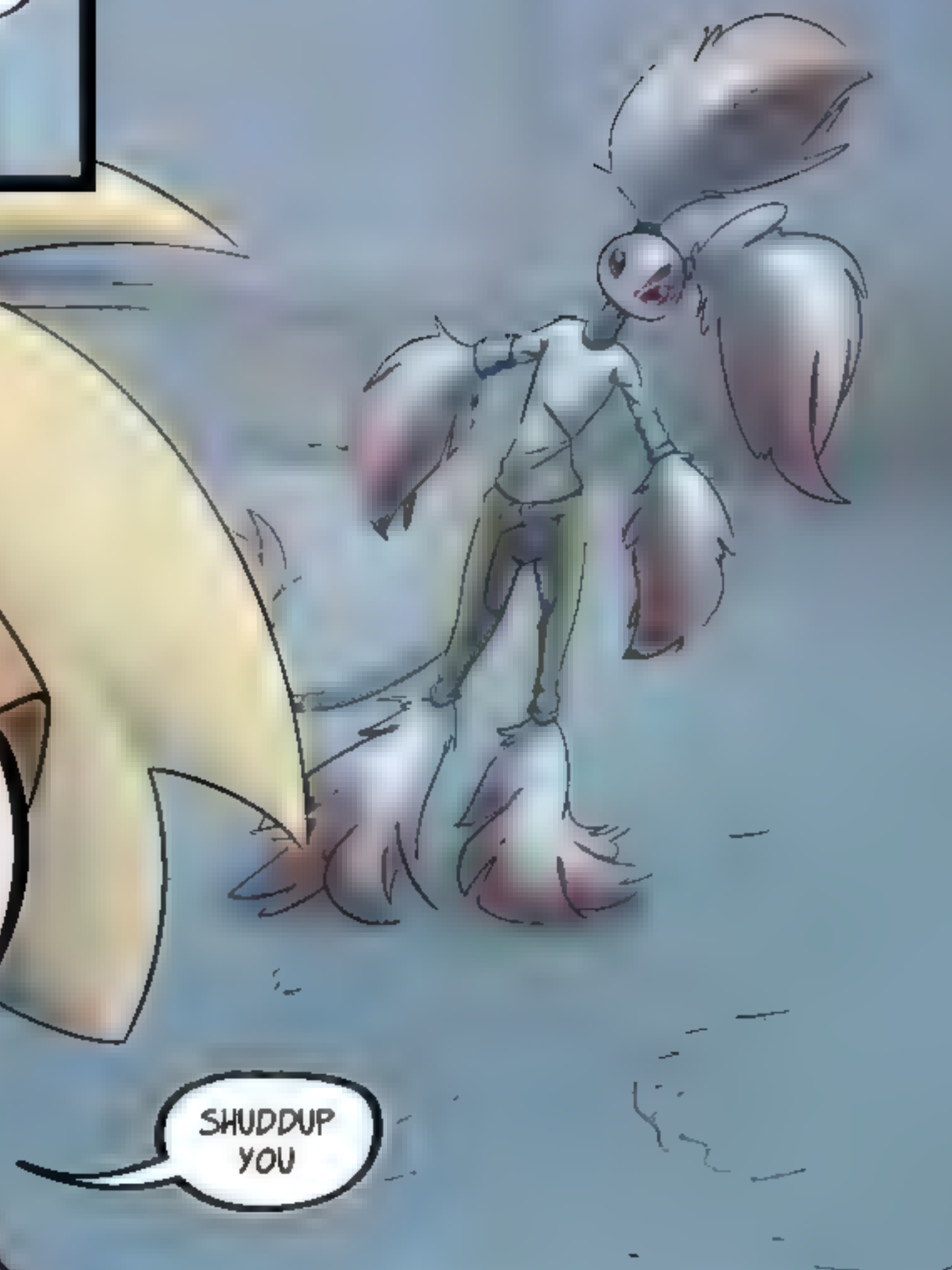
YOUR ONLY LITTLE SISTER.

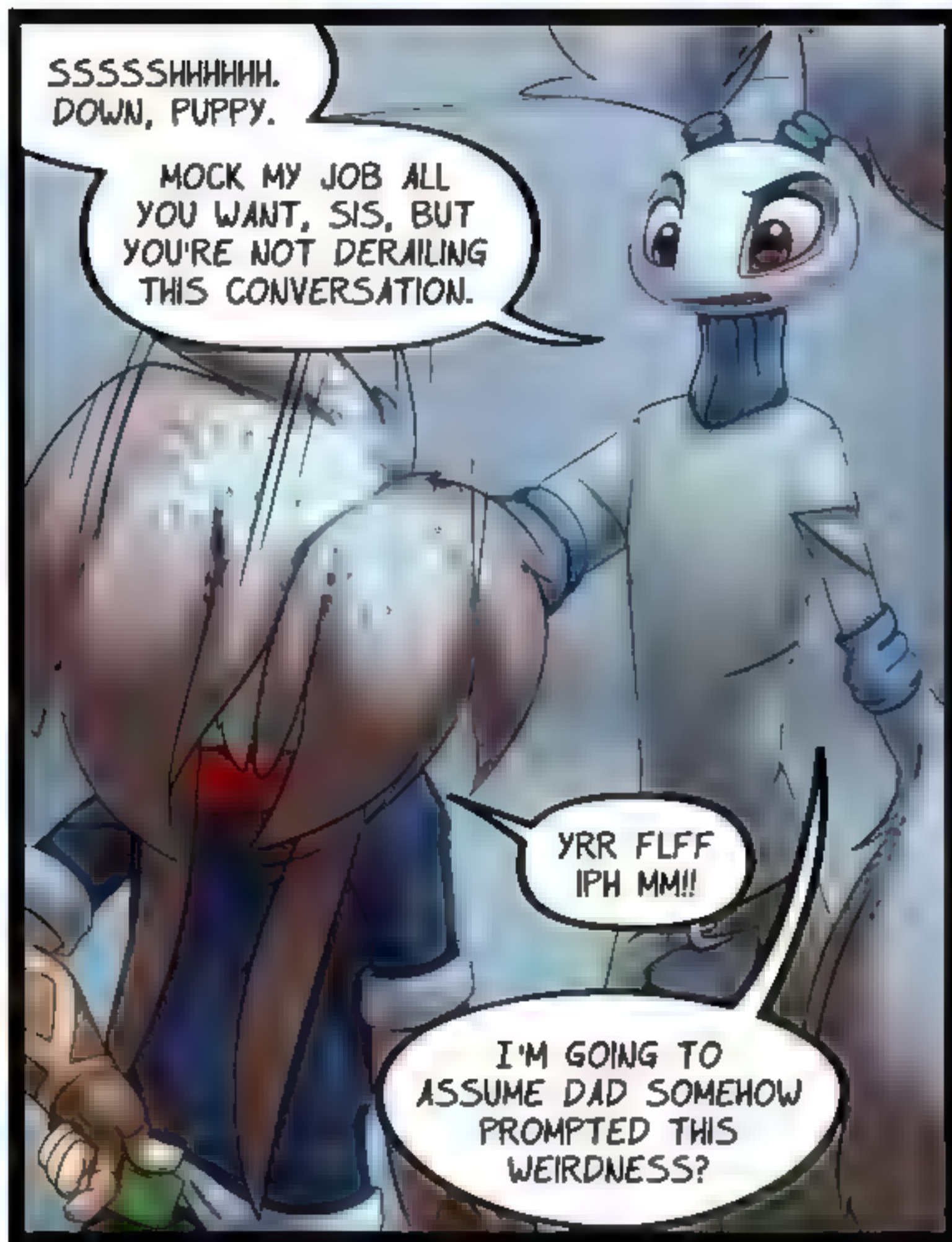
--BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE BUSY BULLYING PEOPLE.

PFFT, WHAT? NOOOOO.

YES.

NAAAAW.







LOOK, IT'S
WEEK ONE OF
THE TERM, RIGHT?
BUT ALREADY WE'VE
GOT KIDS SKIPPING
THEIR CLASSES.
THAT'S LAZY AND
DISRESPECTFUL.



SO I'M GONNA
SCARE 'EM INTO
CUTTING IT OUT!

THAT'LL SHOW
DAD I HAVE
LEADERSHIP
SKILLS.

KHEIL,
THAT'S...

...REALLY
DUMB.



OH YEAH?
WELL YOUR
FACE IS REALLY
DUMB!!

GASP!



...UH, SORRY,
I FORGOT YOU
DON'T HANG OUT
WITH OZ AND ME.

I DIDN'T
MEAN THAT,
PROMISE.



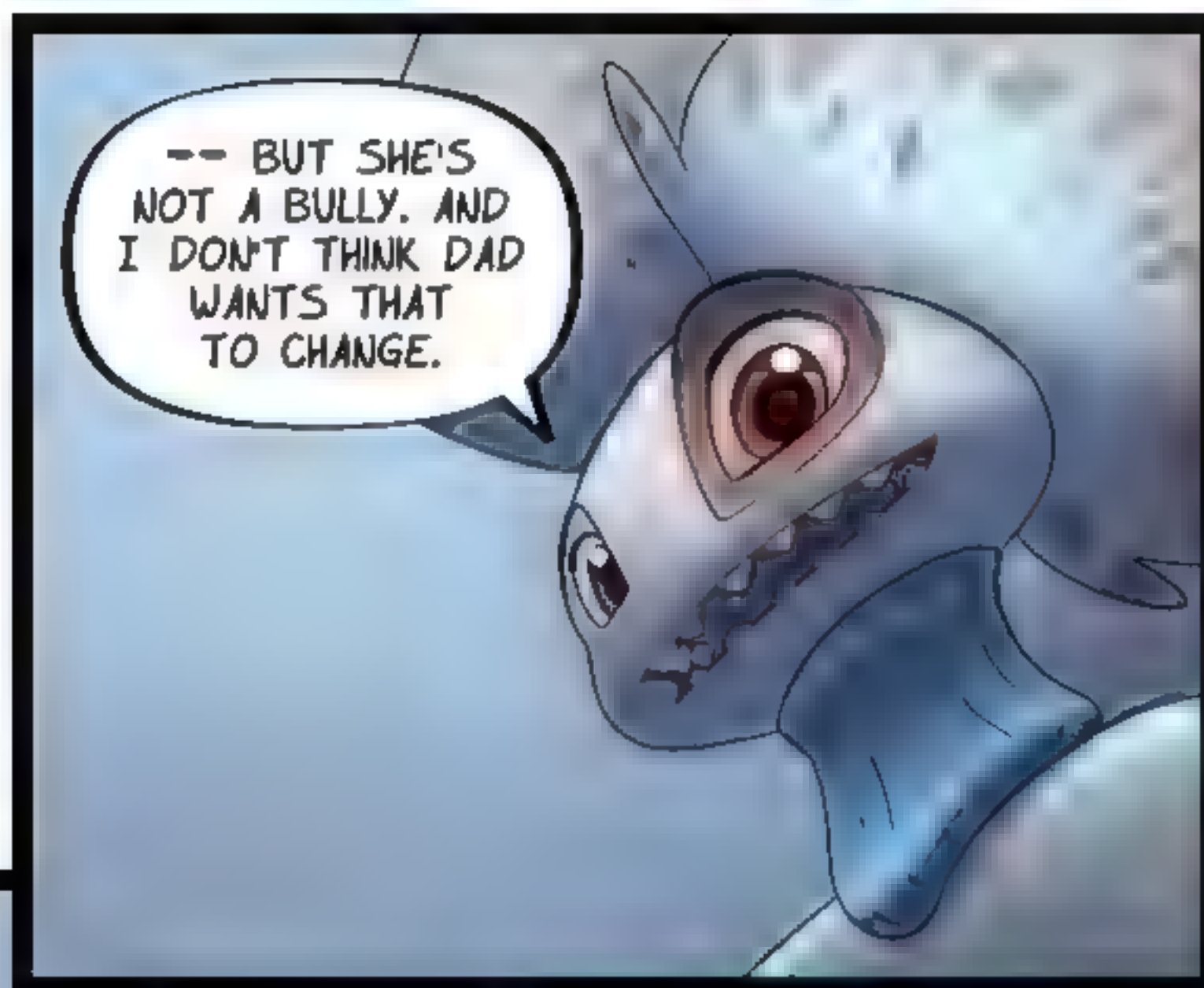
PFFF, COME ON,
YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T
GET OFFENDED
BY THAT.

NOW LISTEN
UP, I'M GOING TO
TELL YOU SOMETHING
VERY IMPORTANT.

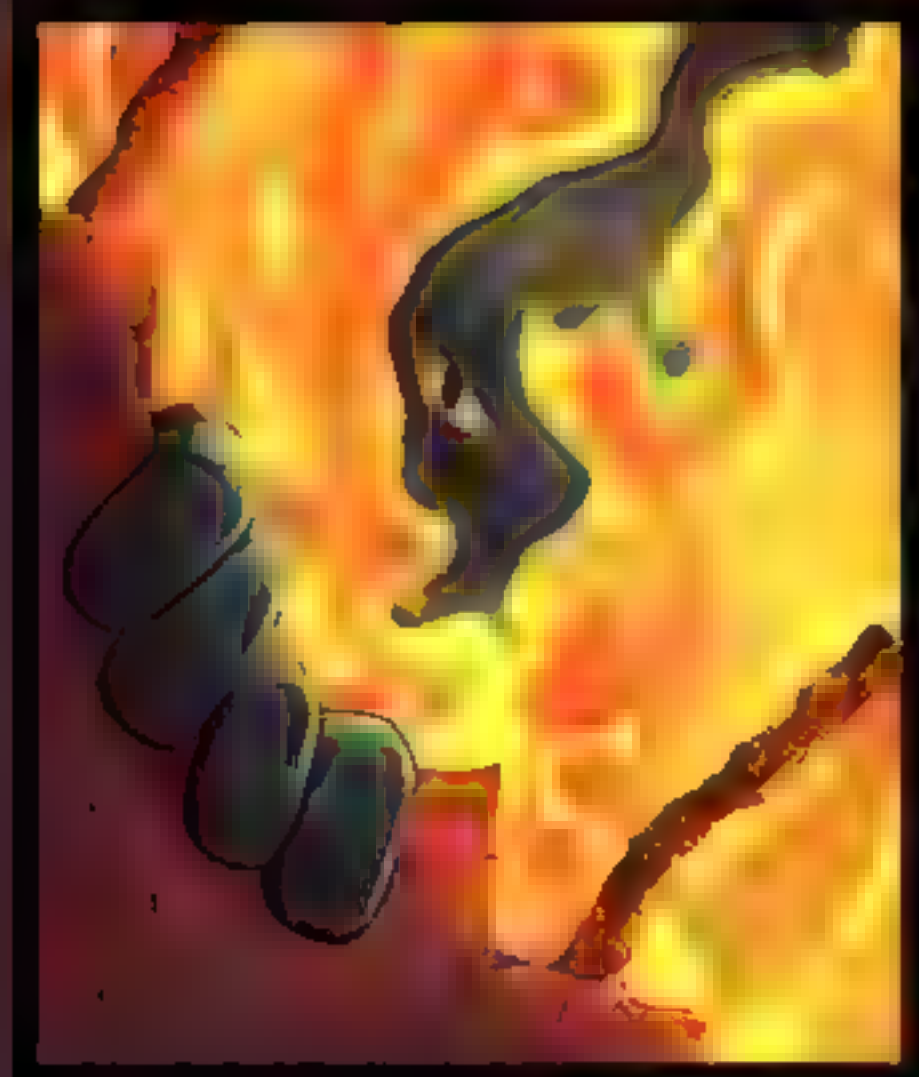
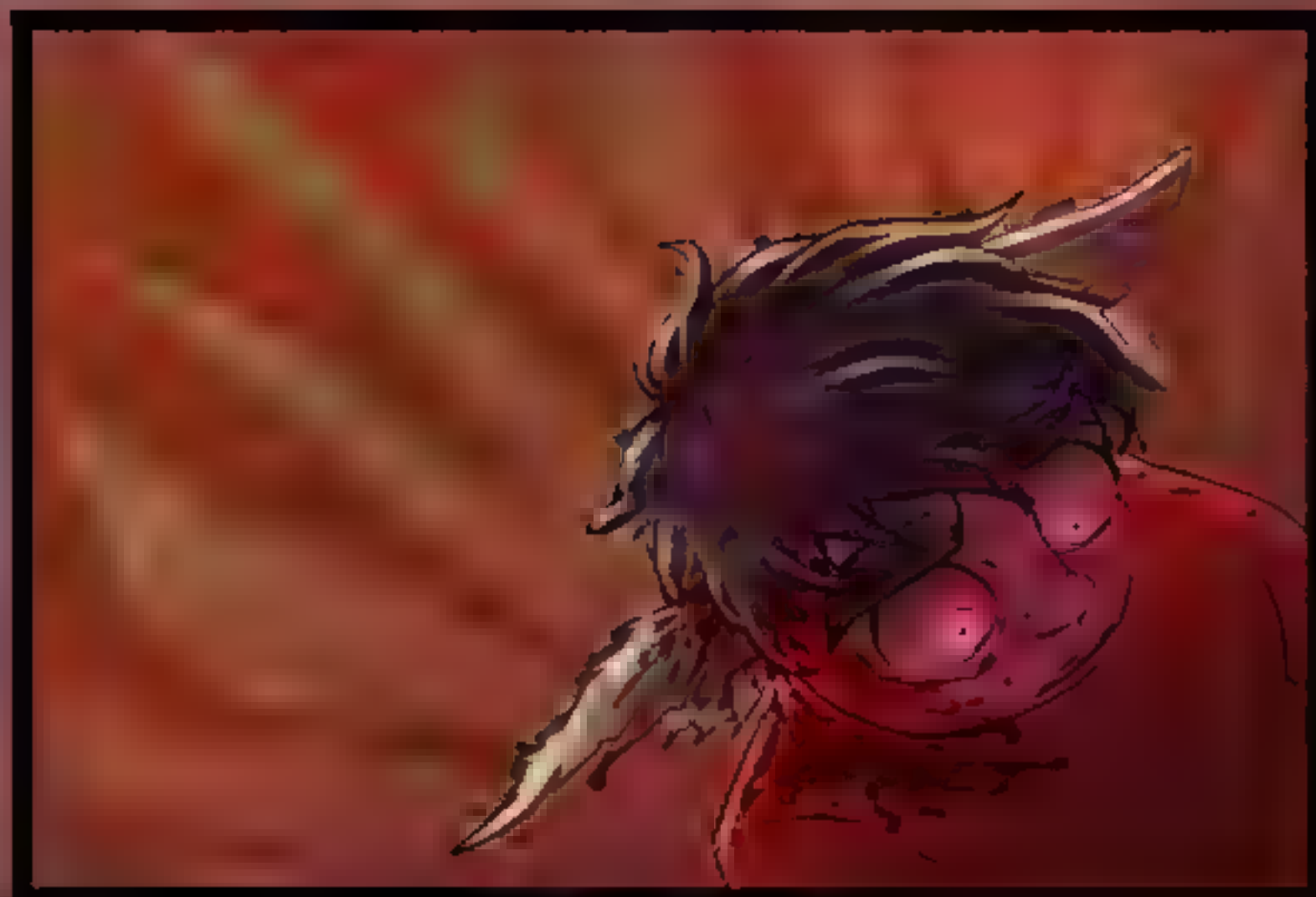
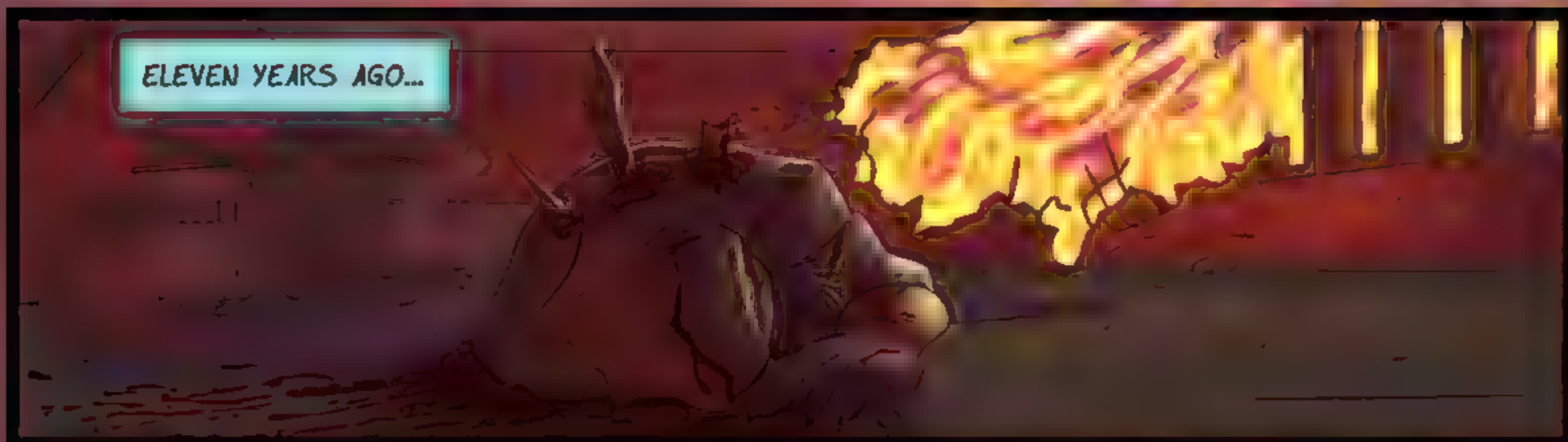
YOU LISTENING?

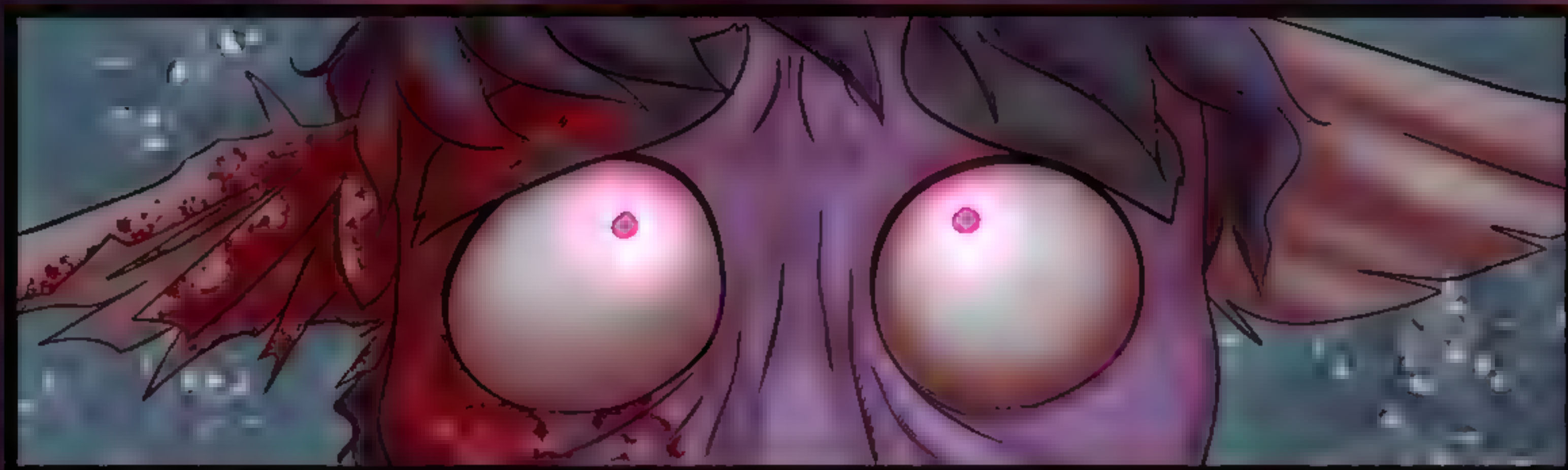
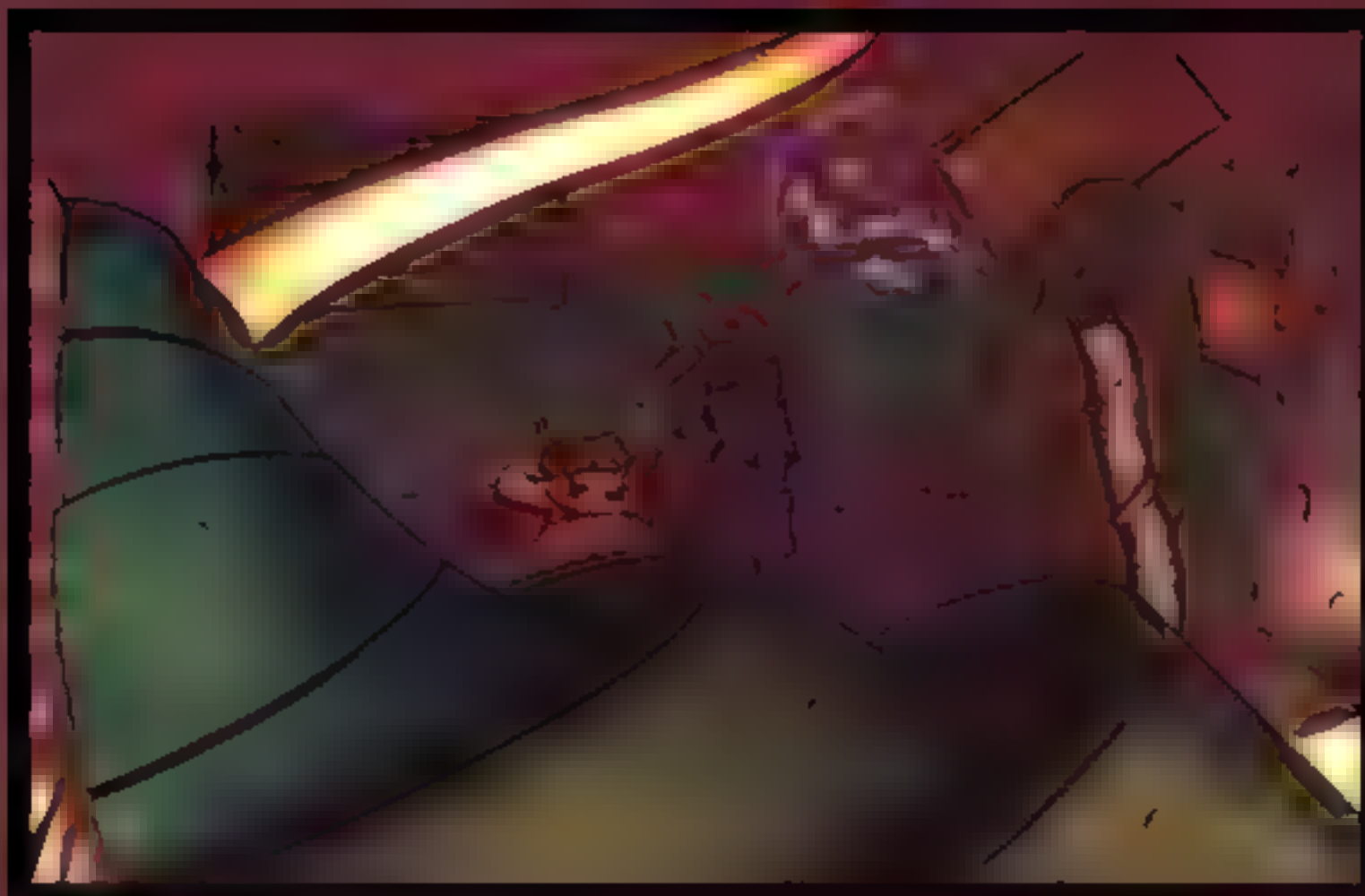
I'M LISTENING.

OKAY--



ELEVEN YEARS AGO...







YOU SLUGGLETS
CALL THIS **RUNNING?**

PICK IT UP, PICK
IT UP! SEVENTEEN
LAPS TO GO --

Y'ALL BETTER
FINISH BEFORE I
DIE OF OLD AGE!



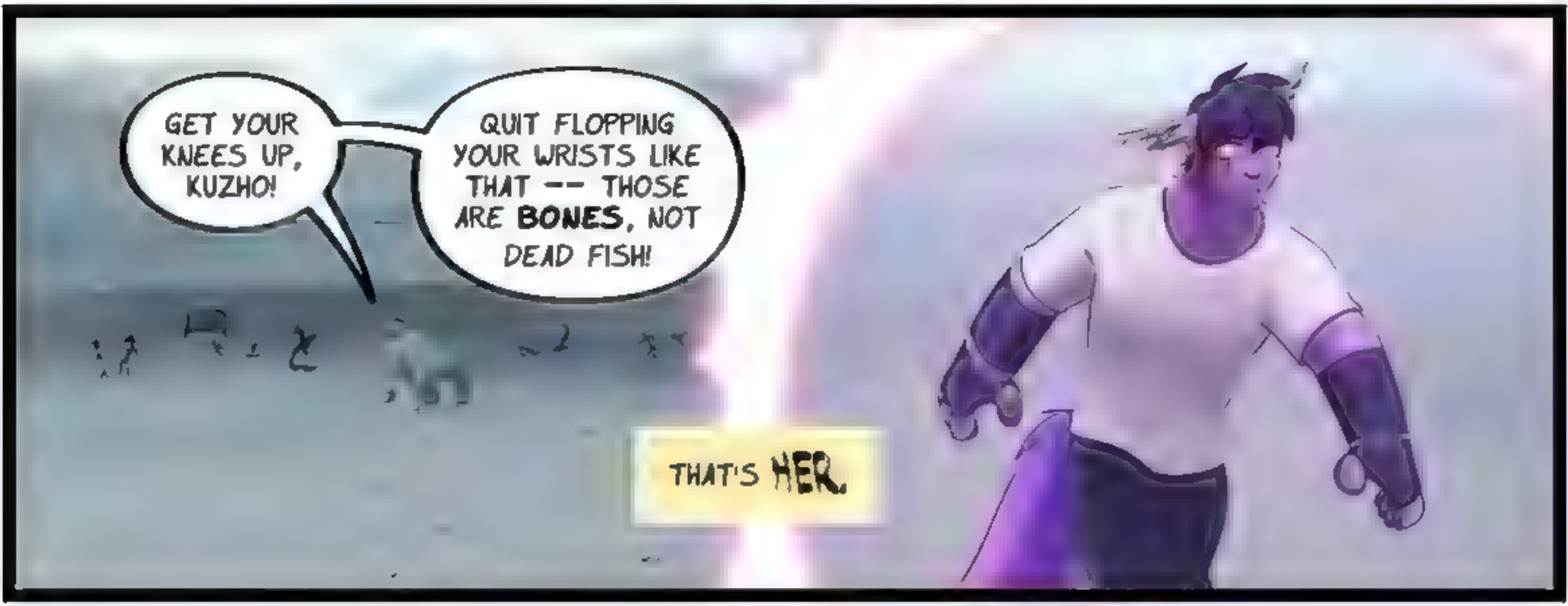
ANKMET!! DO
YOU SEE ANY
RAIN HERE? ANY
SNOW? NO? REALLY!
THEN **GET MOVING.**

NO APOCALYPTIC
WEATHER, NO
EXCUSES!

...THAT'S HER.



THAT'S HER.



GET YOUR
KNEES UP,
KUZHO!

QUIT FLOPPING
YOUR WRISTS LIKE
THAT -- THOSE
ARE **BONES**, NOT
DEAD FISH!

THAT'S HER.



CRAP CRAP
CRAP CRAP
CRAP.

HOW DID--?



WHO LET
HER IN?!



SOMEONE
MUST'VE SNITCHED
ON NAZURET--



THERE'S GOTTA
BE A STING OPERATION
GOING DOWN.

WHY ELSE
WOULD **SHE**
BE HERE?

I CAN'T--



DAMMIT, THESE
PEOPLE ARE MY
FAMILY.

I CAN'T
LET THIS
HAPPEN
AGAIN.

WHAT DO
I DO?

SLOW DOWN,
OZ, SLOOOOW
DOWN. DEEP
BREATHS.

NAZURET WOULD
NEVER HIRE THAT WOMAN
IF HE KNEW WHO SHE
REALLY WORKS FOR.

OKAY. STING
OPERATION.

THAT MEANS...
THEY'RE LOOKING FOR
PROOF. SHE'S WAITING
FOR SOMEONE TO SLIP
UP AND PROVE THE
SCHOOL IS A FRONT.



...LIKE BY COMING
AT HER WITH A
WEAPON.

OKAY, SO I CAN'T
BRUTE-FORCE THIS.

THAT'S A
KHEIL JOB.

WHAT WOULD
AL DO?

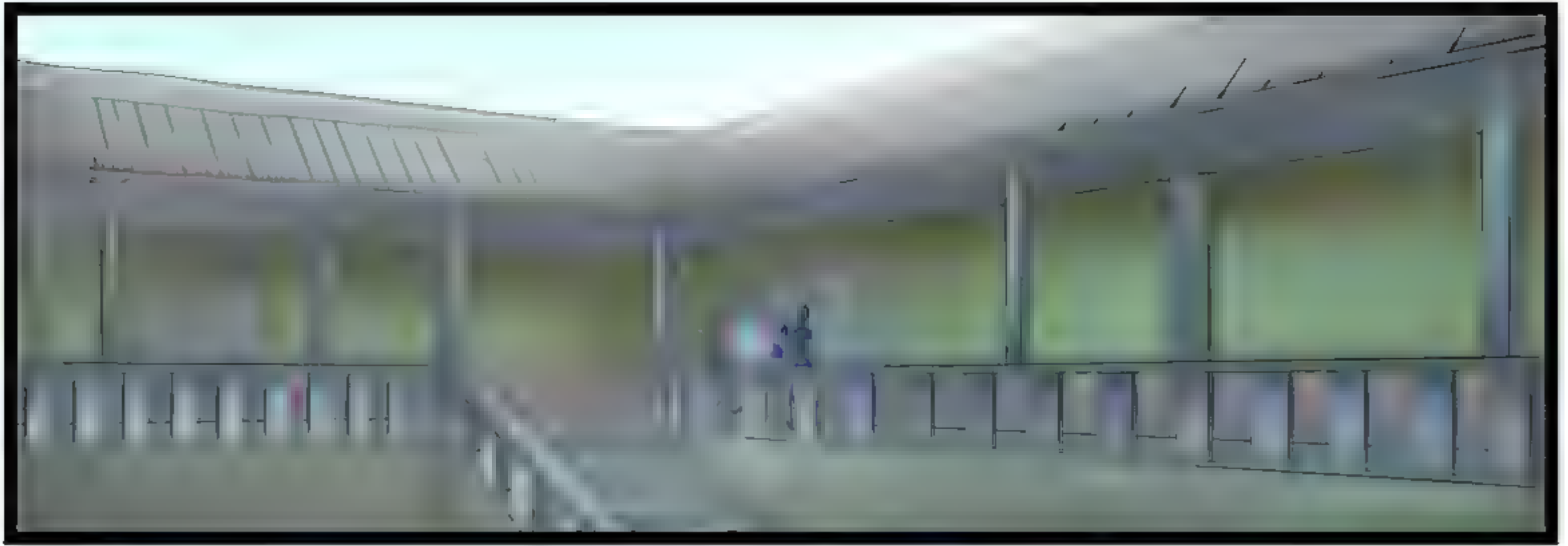


AL WOULD... UHHH...
DELEGATE THE WORK
TO SOMEONE BETTER
EQUIPPED TO HANDLE IT.

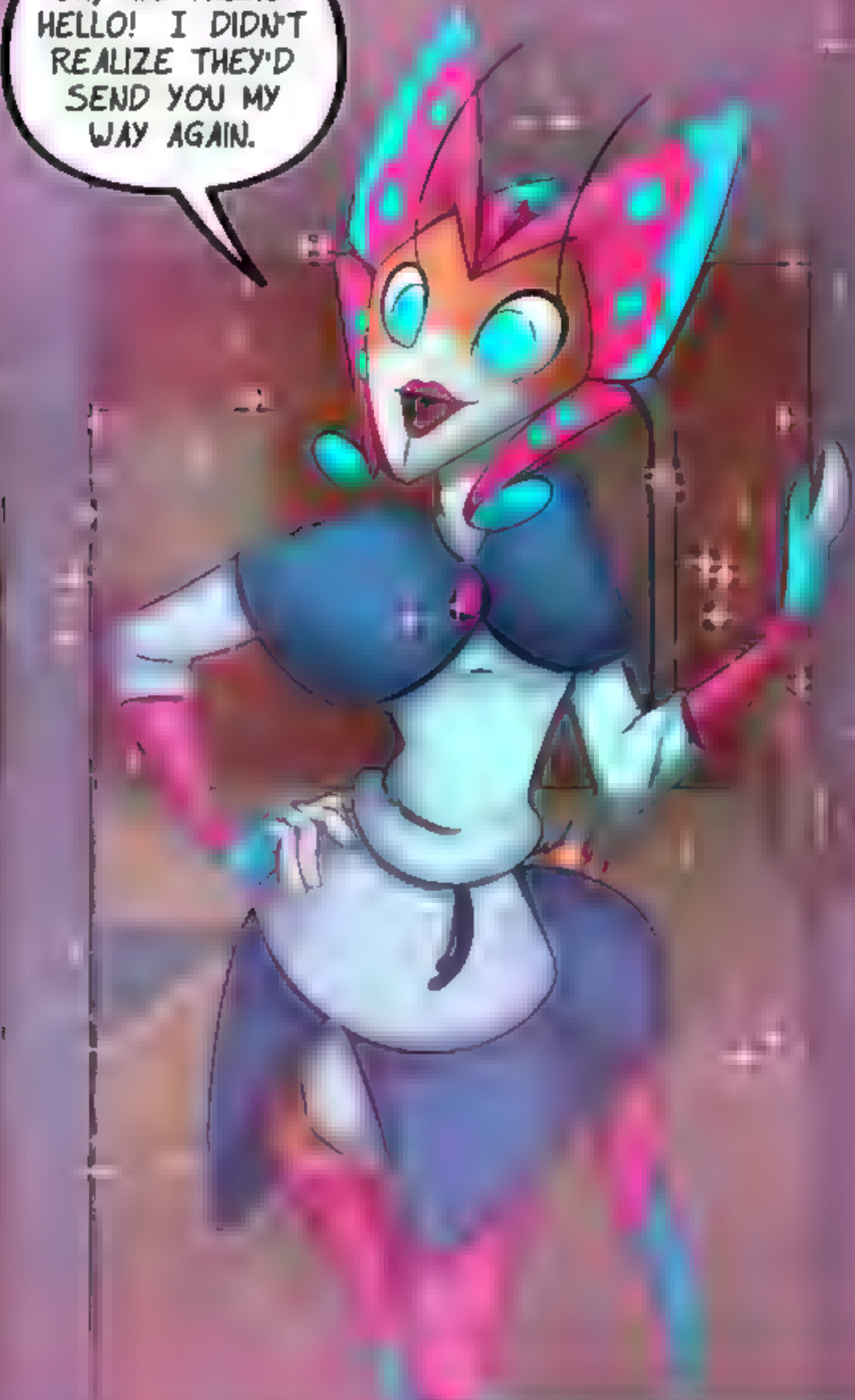
SHE'D WARN
THE STAFF.

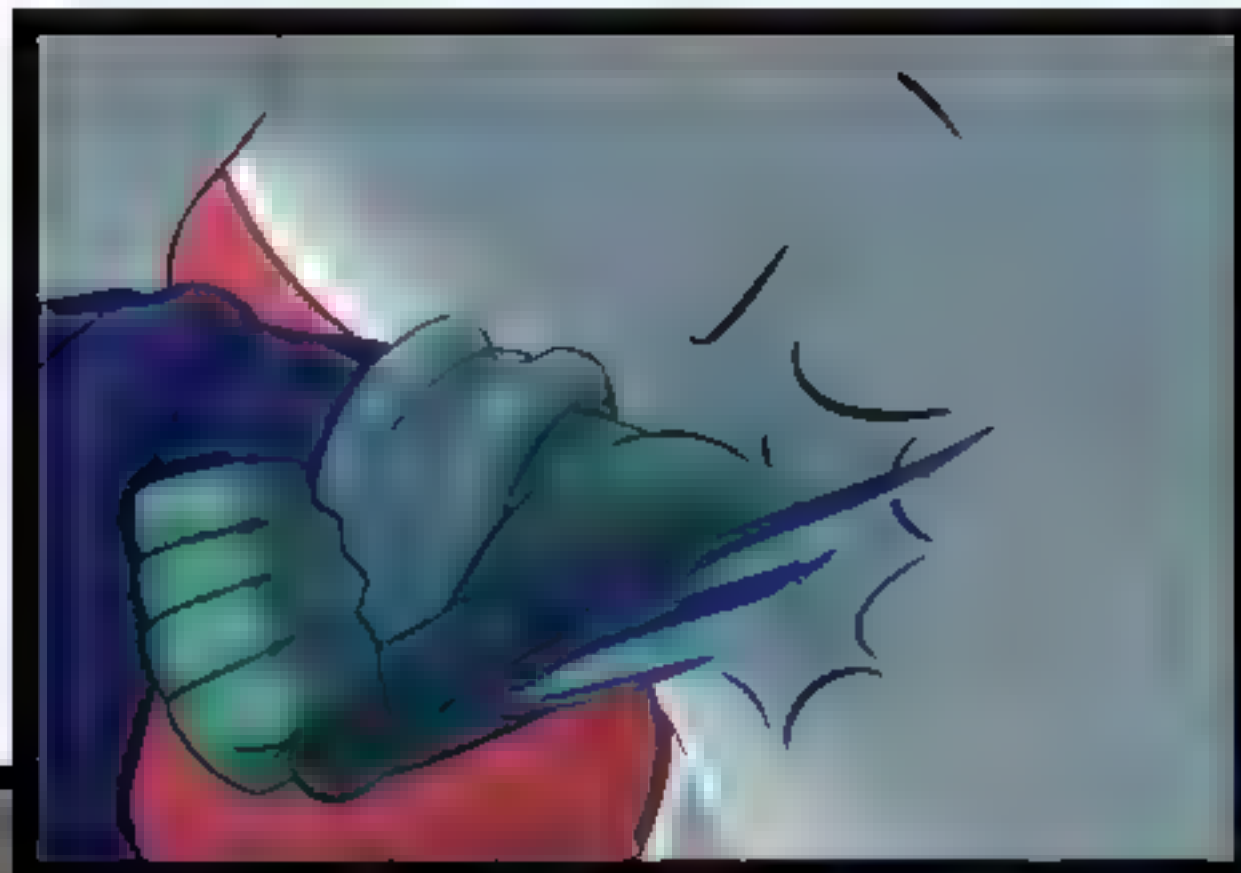
YEAH, THAT'S
IT -- I GOTTA
WARN THE STAFF.

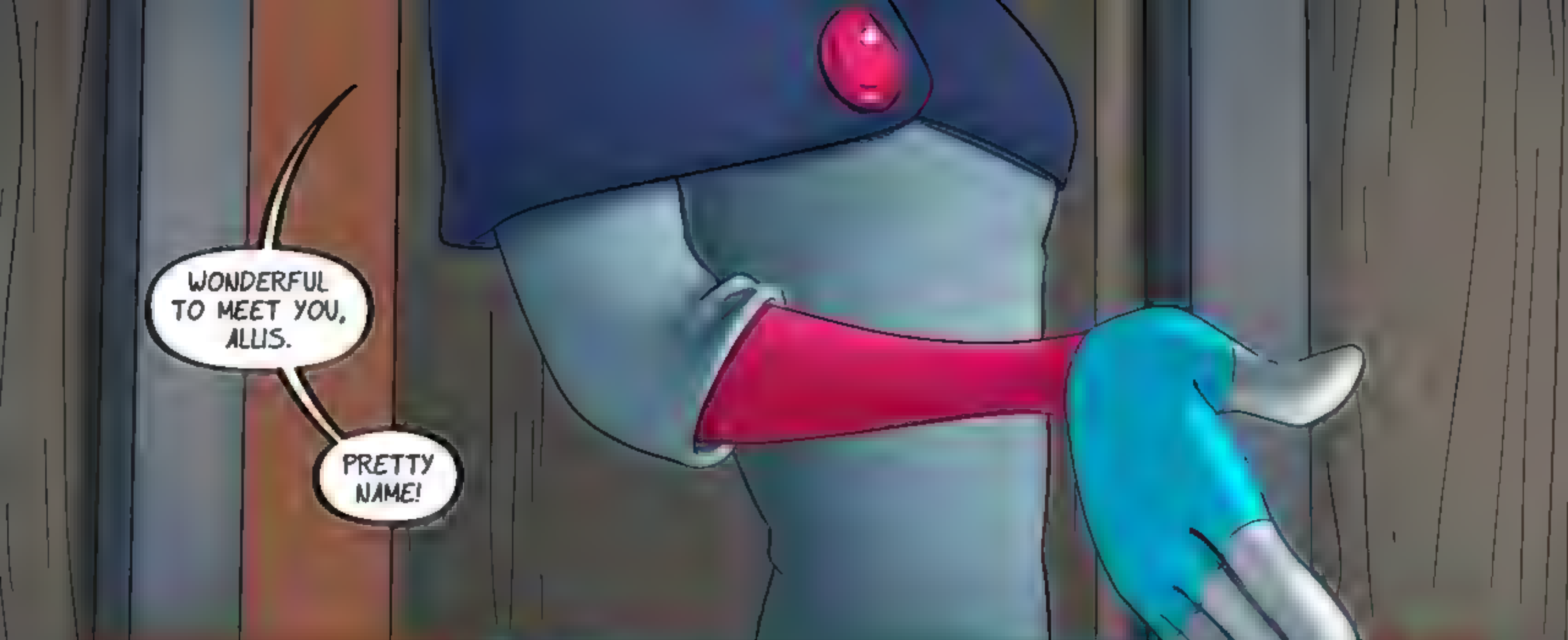




OH, MR. TAZHO!
HELLO! I DIDN'T
REALIZE THEY'D
SEND YOU MY
WAY AGAIN.

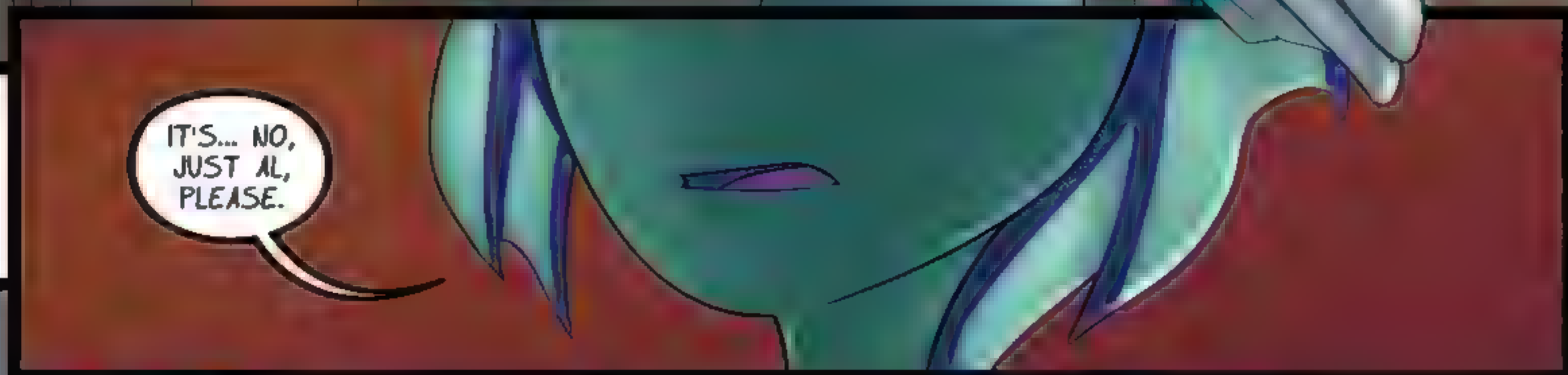






WONDERFUL
TO MEET YOU,
ALLIS.

PRETTY
NAME!



IT'S... NO,
JUST AL,
PLEASE.

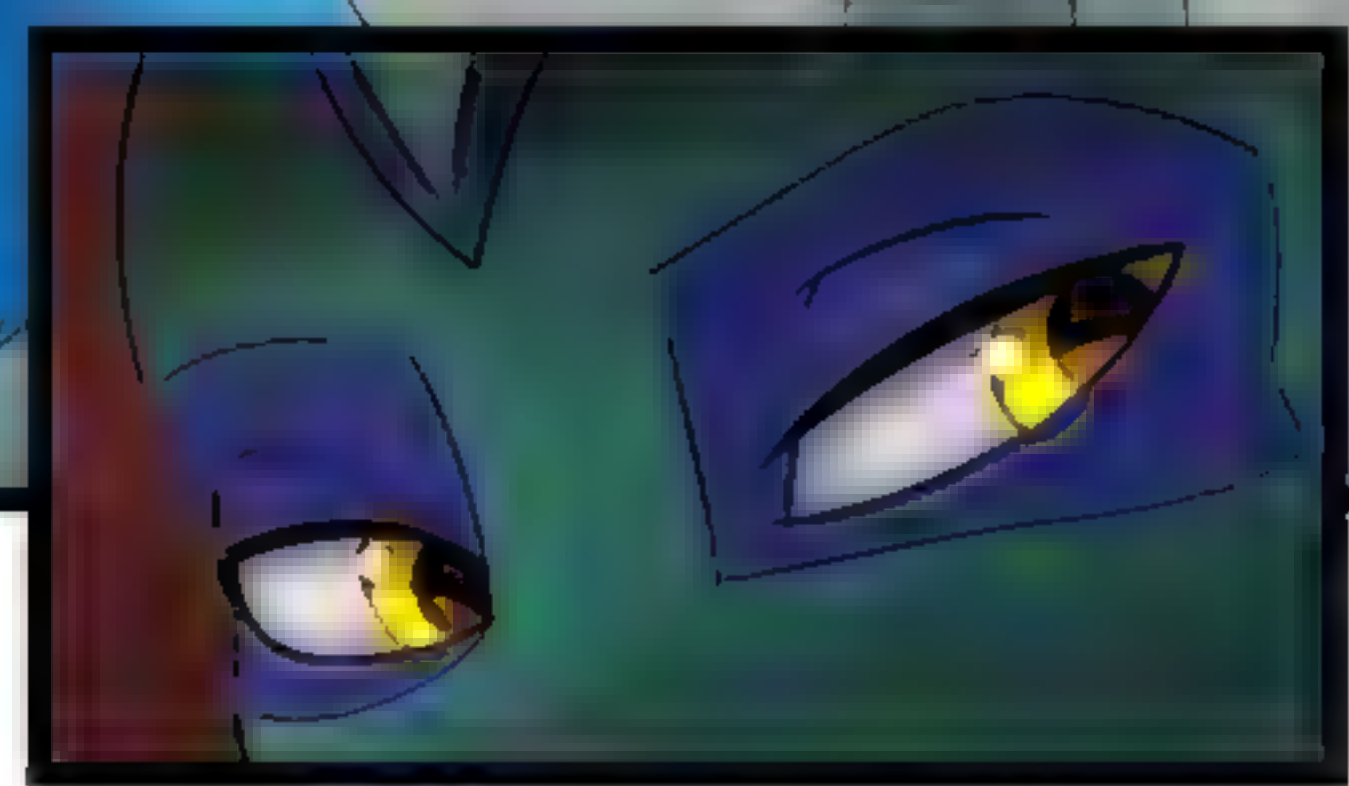
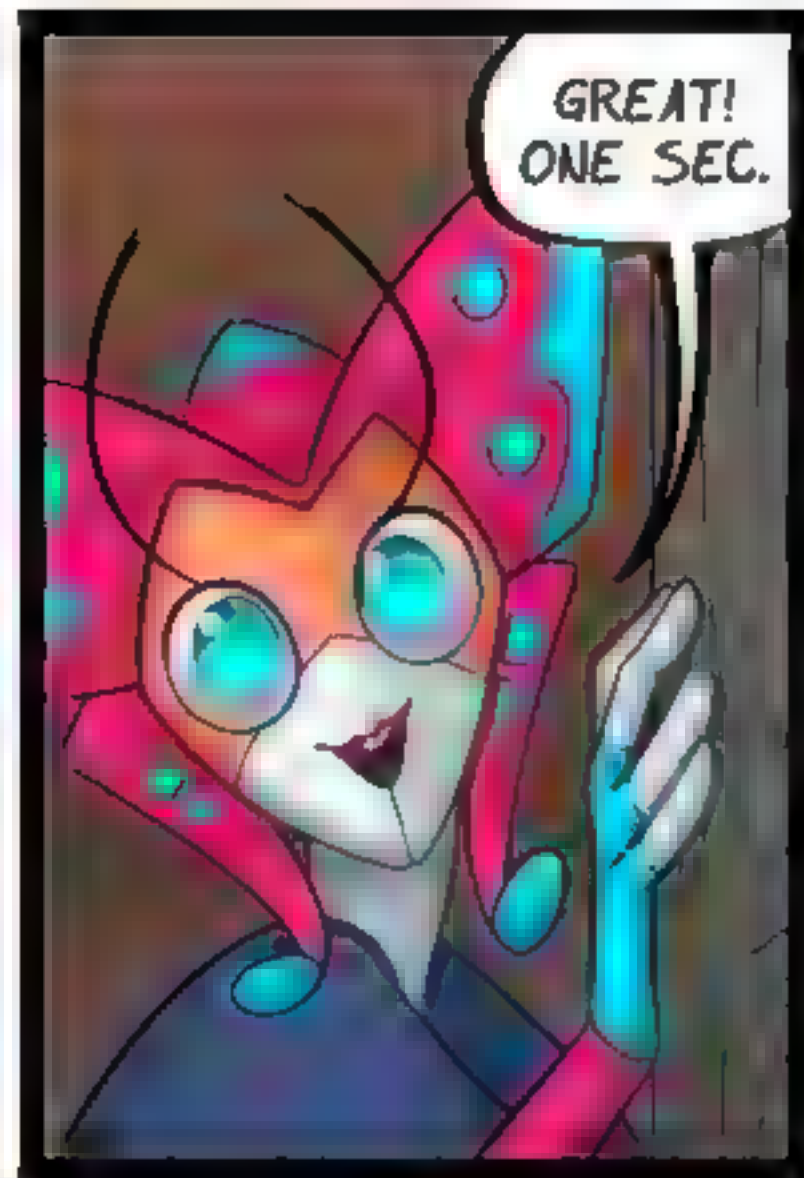


OH?

DULY NOTED,
AL. THAT SUITS
YOU NICELY.



I - UHM,
THANK YOU.



THIS WOMAN IS
THE ONE WHO CAN
BLOW THE WHISTLE
ON THE ACADEMY'S...
MORE UNORTHODOX
PROGRAMS.

AND YOU, SOMEONE
DEEPLY ENTRENCHED IN
THOSE PROGRAMS, ARE
CLEARLY DISTRACTED
IN HER PRESENCE.

I HAVE CONCERNS
THAT THIS COMBINATION
OF ELEMENTS COULD
PUT THE SCHOOL
AT RISK...

...GIVEN THE NATURE
OF HER JOB AS AN
INSPECTOR, AND THE
FACT THAT SHE IS
SOMEHOW NOT ON
THE HEADMASTER'S
PAYROLL.

PFFFFFFF
DISTRACTED?
PLEASE, GIVE
ME A LITTLE
CREDIT--





PROFESSOR, WITH
ALL DUE RESPECT:

YOU'RE TOO TRUSTING,
TOO HESITANT TO EXERT YOUR
AUTHORITY, AND TOO CONCERNED
WITH THE FEELINGS OF THOSE
DEEMED TRUSTWORTHY.

FOR INSTANCE,
YOU TRUST ME.

AND IF I WERE
TO TELL INSPECTOR
BILISHT A FLAT-OUT LIE
IN THE NEXT FEW MINUTES,
YOU'D PLAY ALONG, JUST
TO PRESERVE MY
REPUTATION.

YOU'D HATE
TO HUMILIATE ME
BY EXPOSING IT.



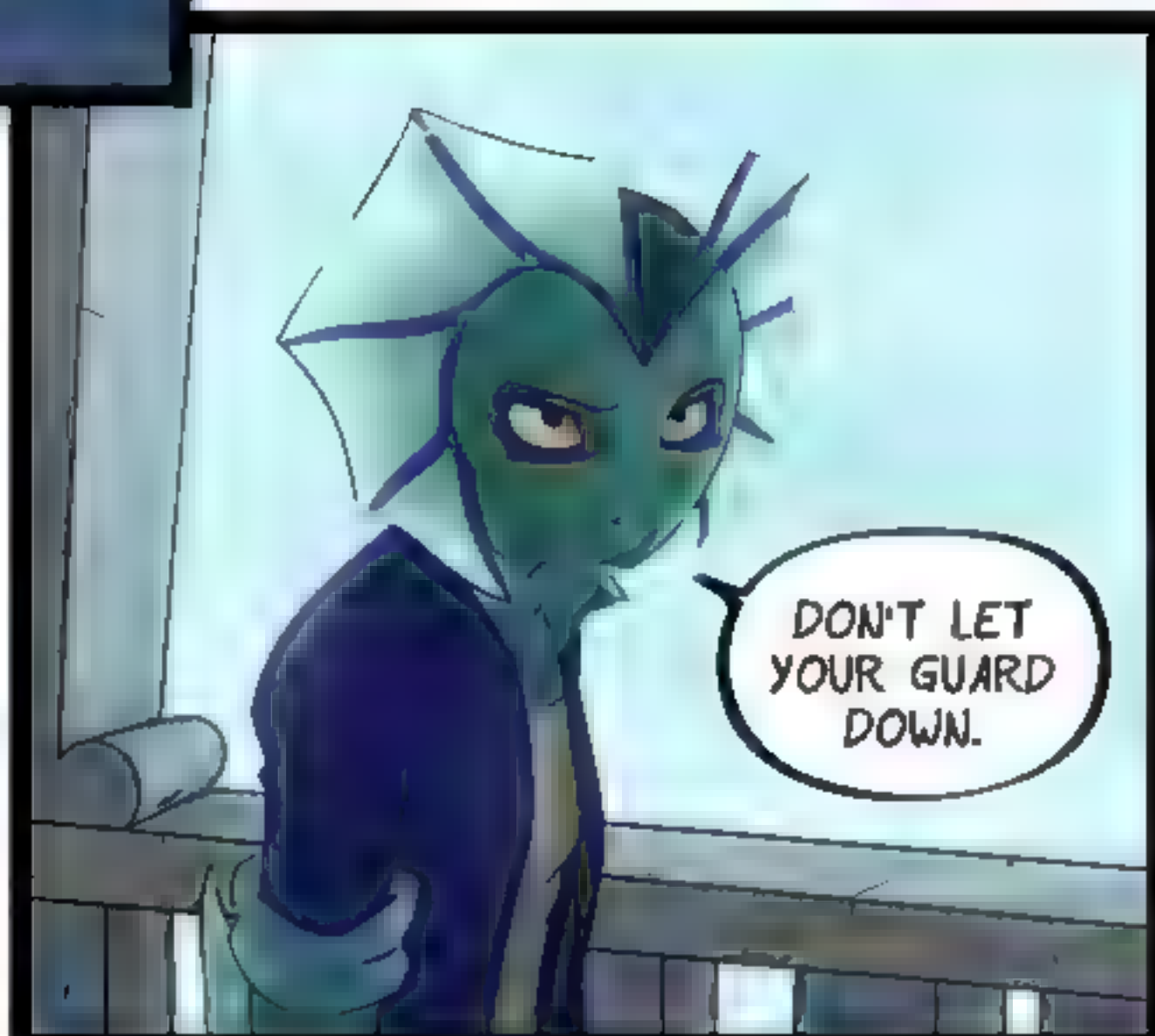
I--
WHAT?

THAT'S NOT
TRUE, I'D--



PROFESSOR,
LISTEN.
PLEASE.

FOR THE SAKE
OF THE SCHOOL,
FOR EVERYTHING IT
STANDS FOR--

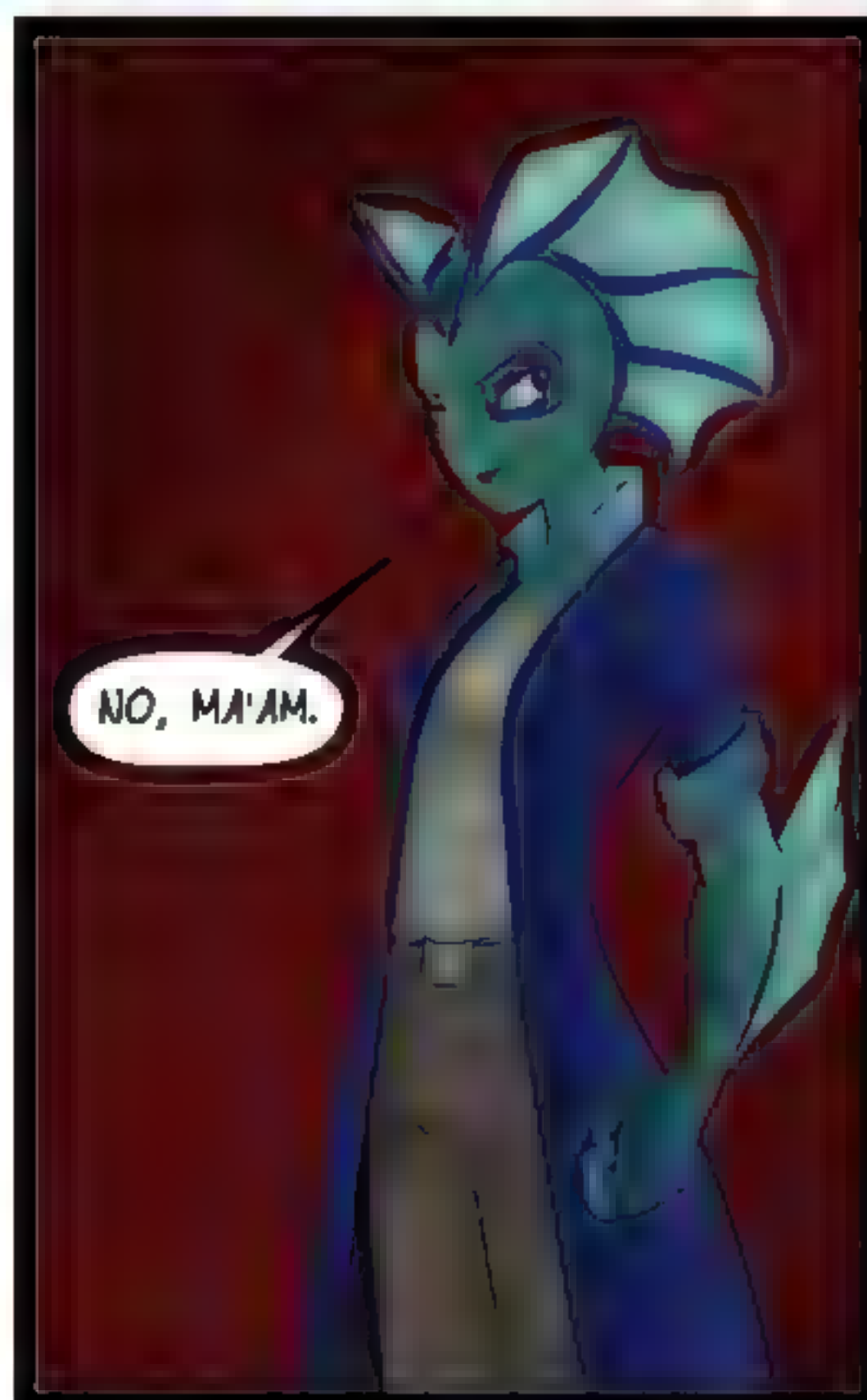


DON'T LET
YOUR GUARD
DOWN.

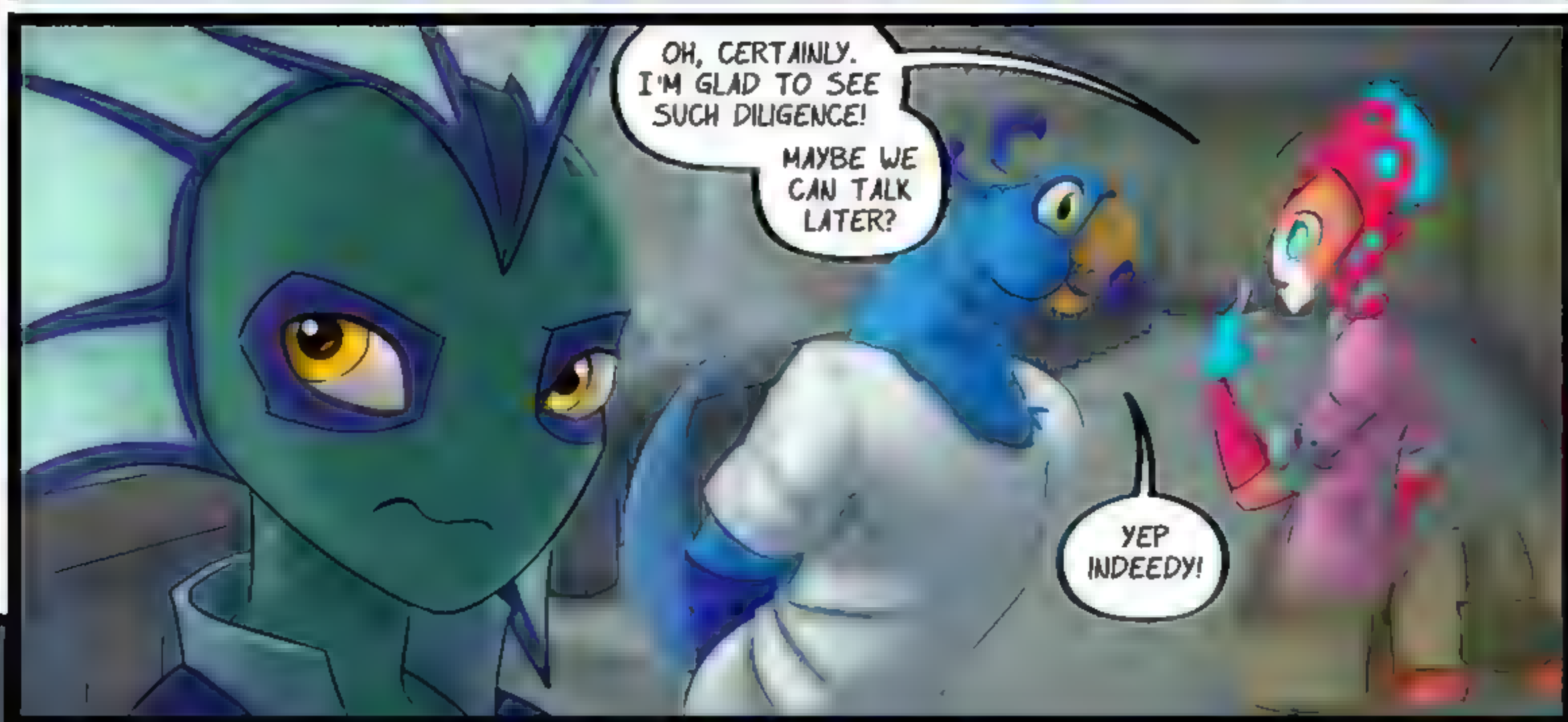
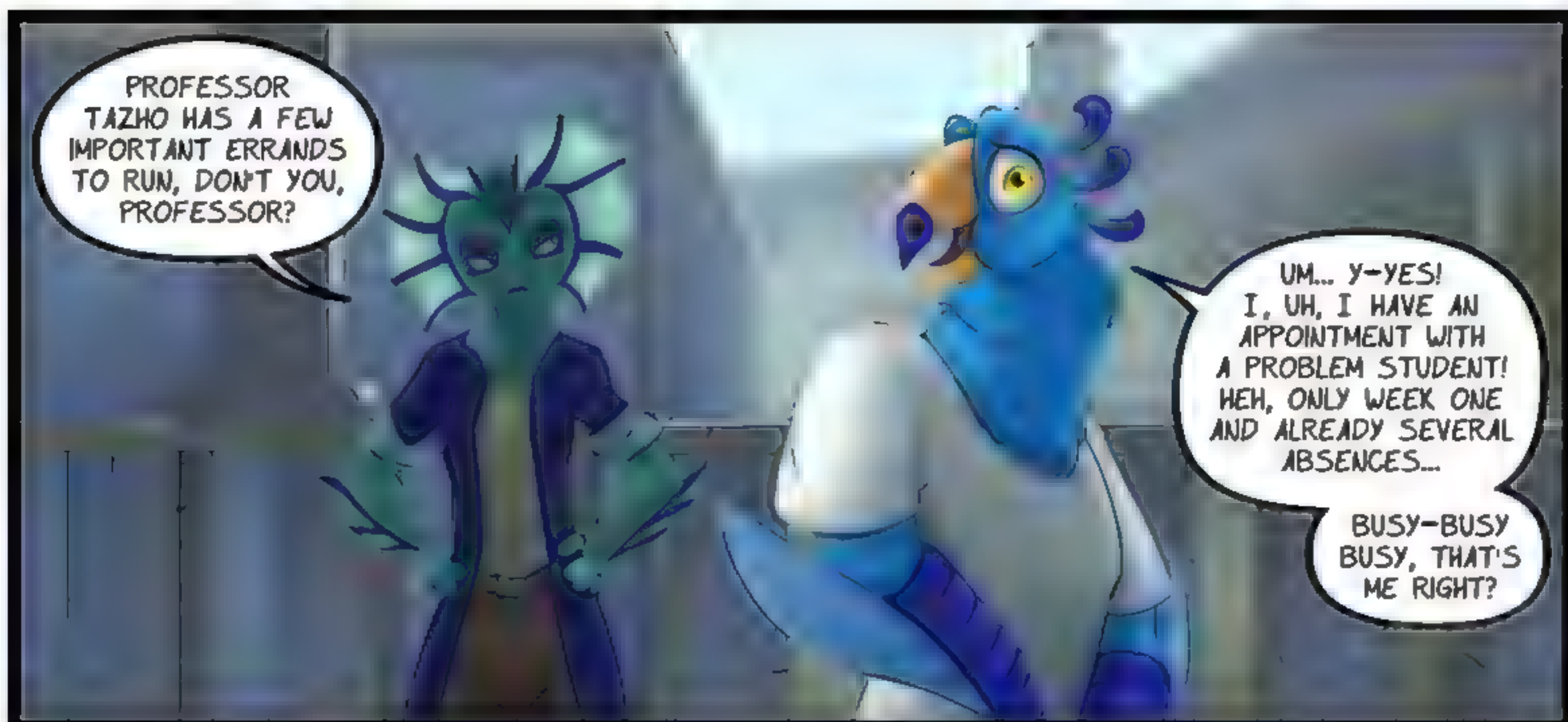


HOO, SORRY
FOR THE DELAY!
I'M READY NOW.

WILL YOU
BE COMING WITH
US, ZHAZE?



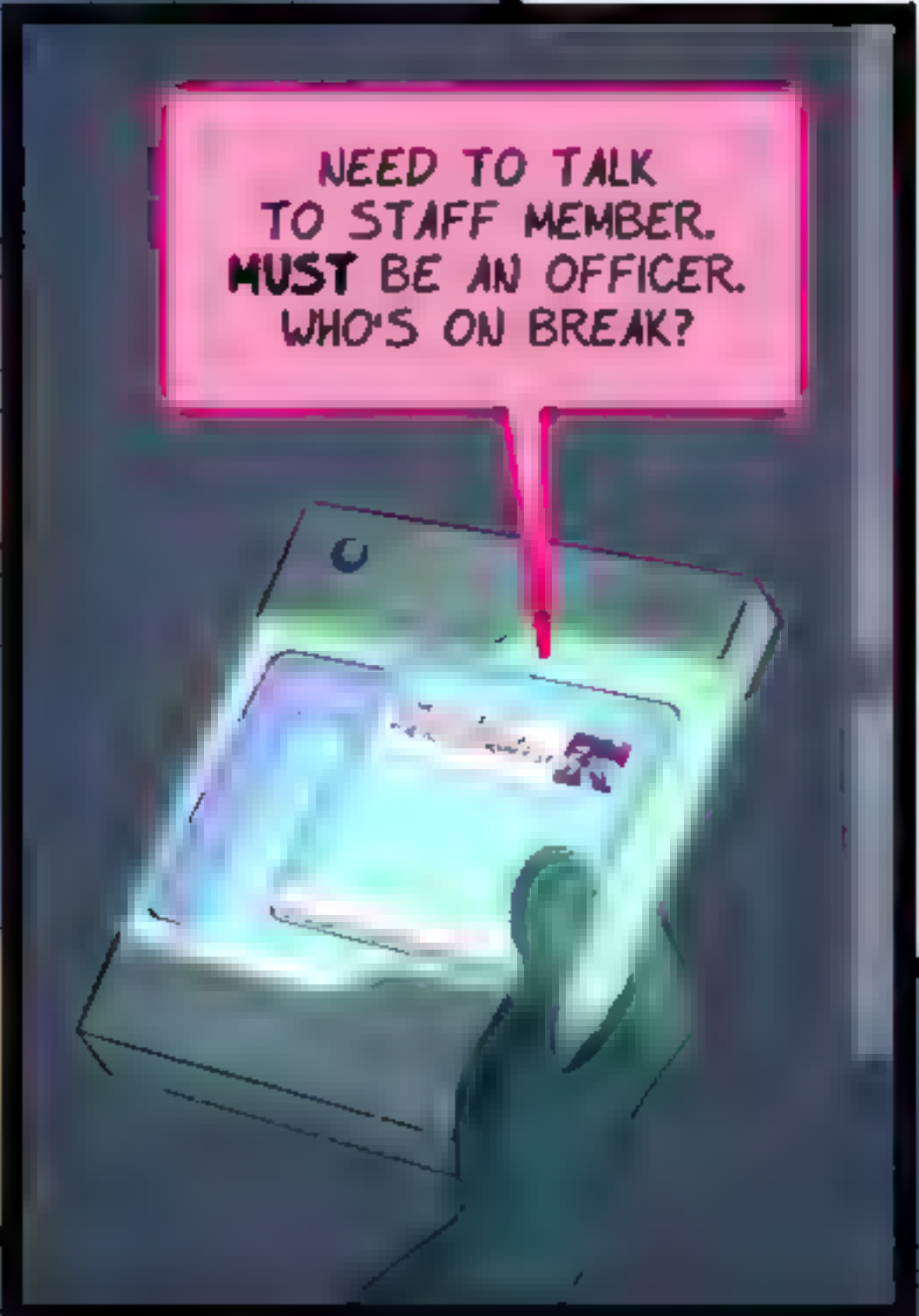
NO, MA'AM.





YES, TO BUSINESS!
WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

I'LL TAKE YOU THROUGH ARGUA FIRST--



NEED TO TALK TO STAFF MEMBER.
MUST BE AN OFFICER.
WHO'S ON BREAK?



ARGUA IS THE TOWN AT THE NORTHERN GATE, ISN'T IT?

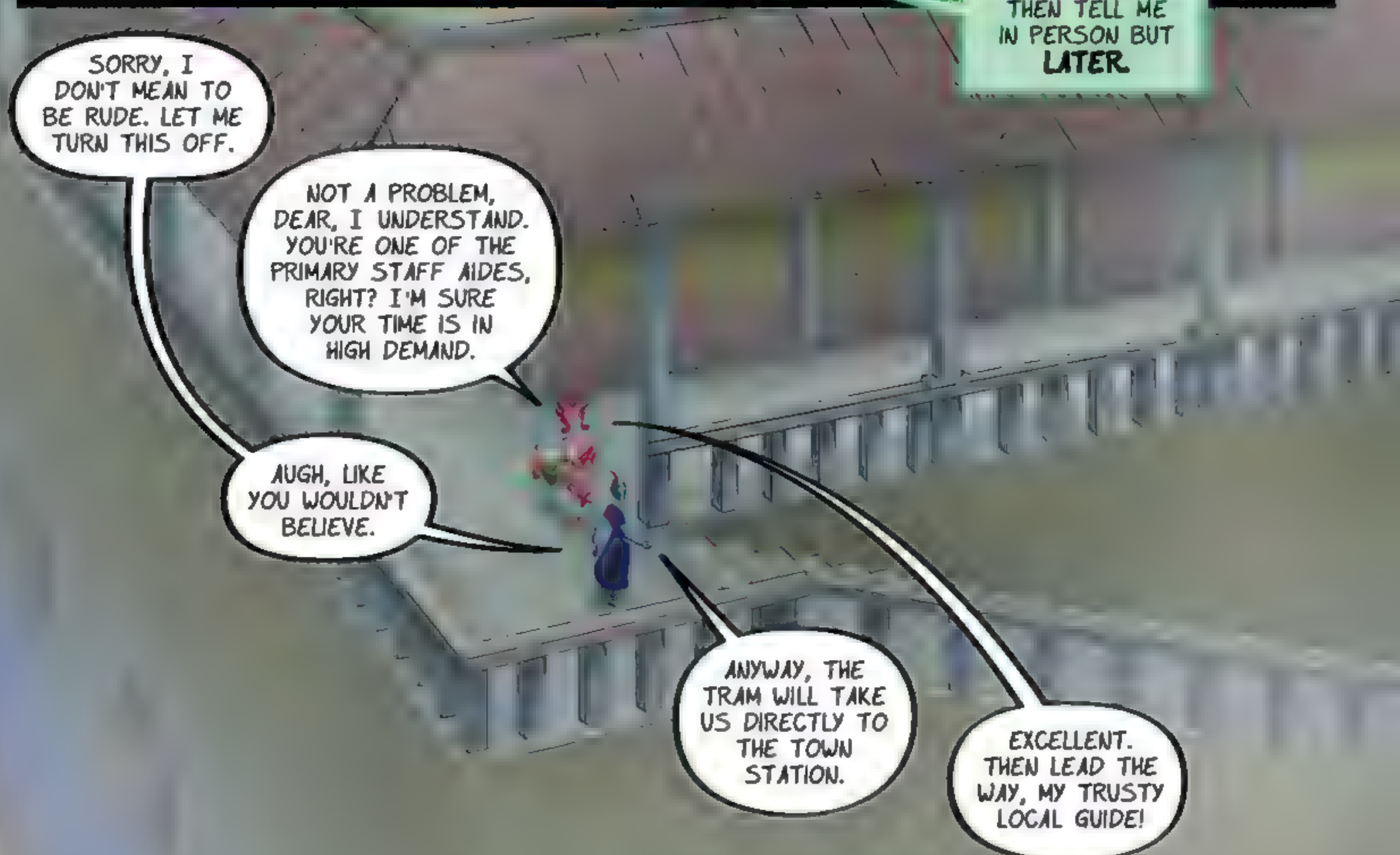
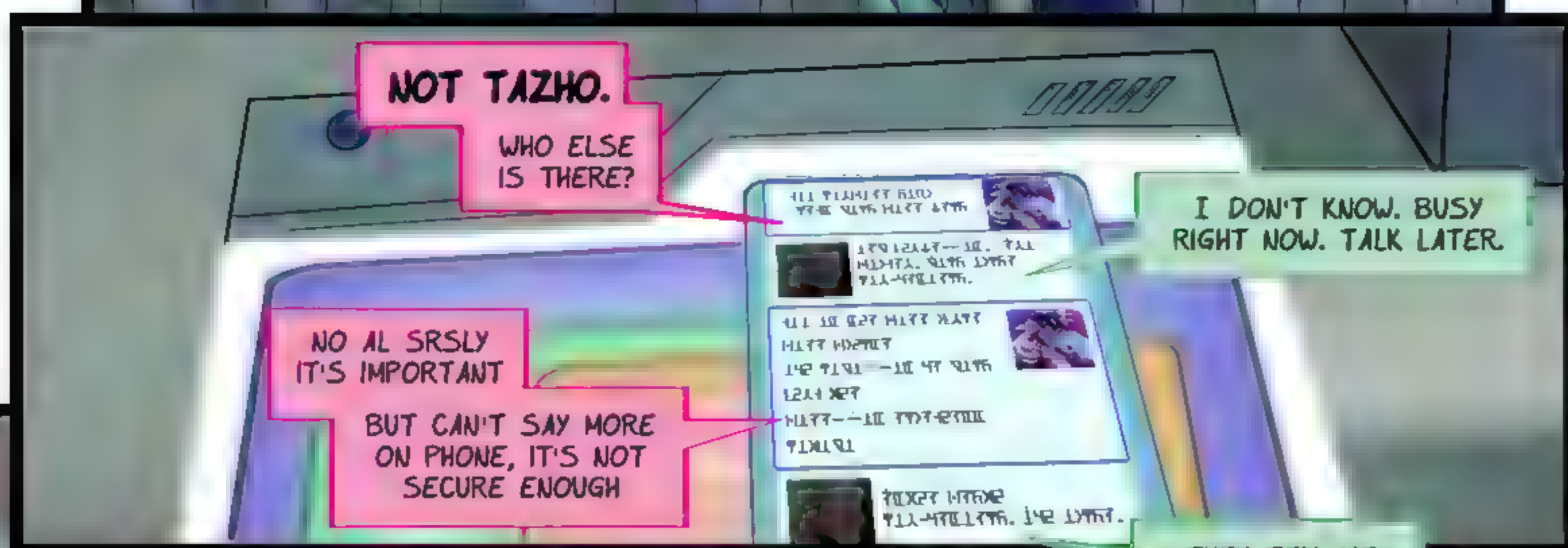
...CORRECT.
THAT'S WHERE OUR SECURITY DEPARTMENT H.Q. IS LOCATED.

THAT SEEMS AWFULLY FAR FROM EVERYTHING. WHY NOT HAVE IT HERE IN THE ADMIN COMPLEX?

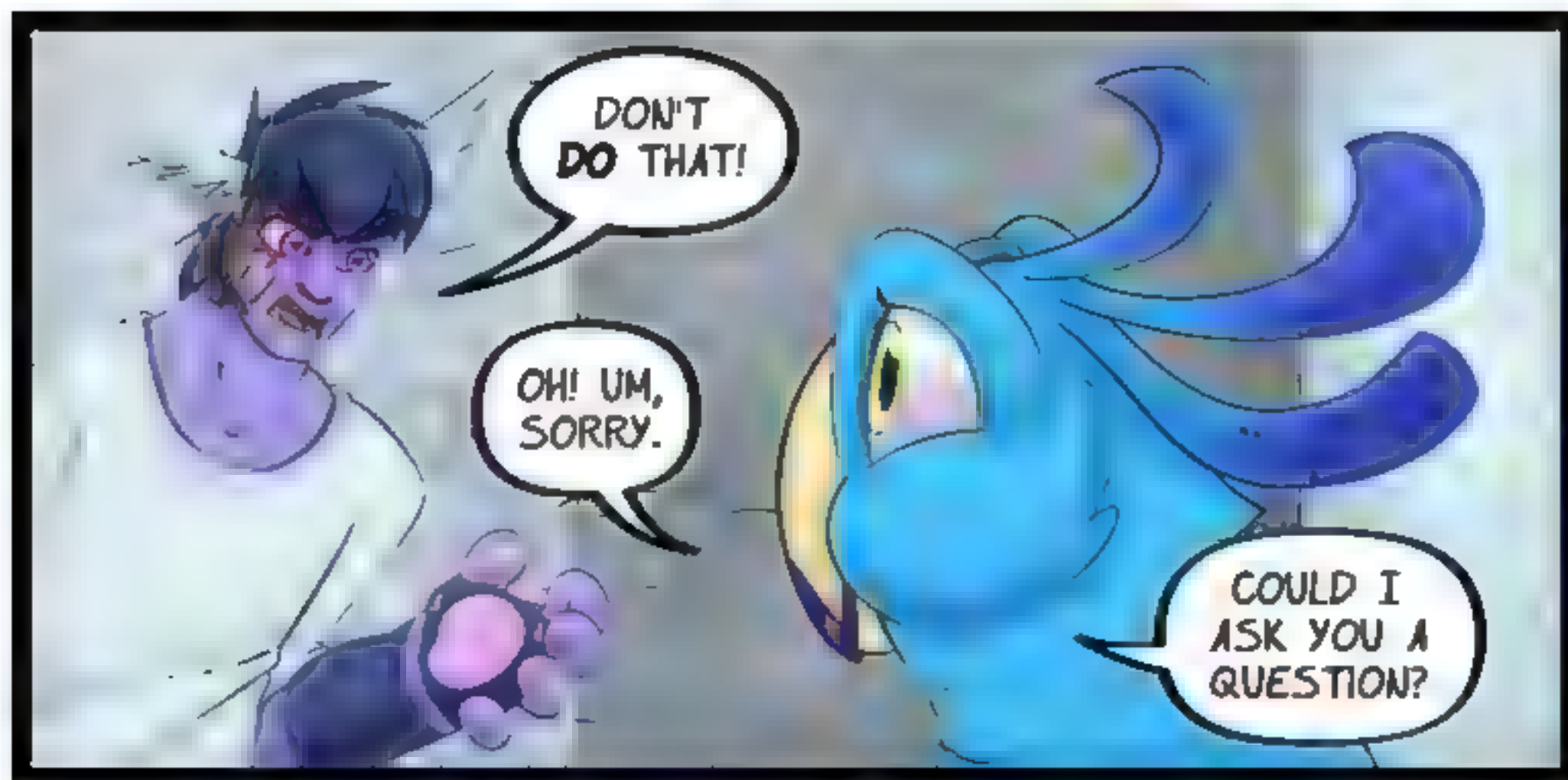
37-76 14177 11-727727 47

179 14741 6111 11-772 1177 47.

I THINK TAZHO'S HEADED YOUR WAY. WHAT'S WRONG?



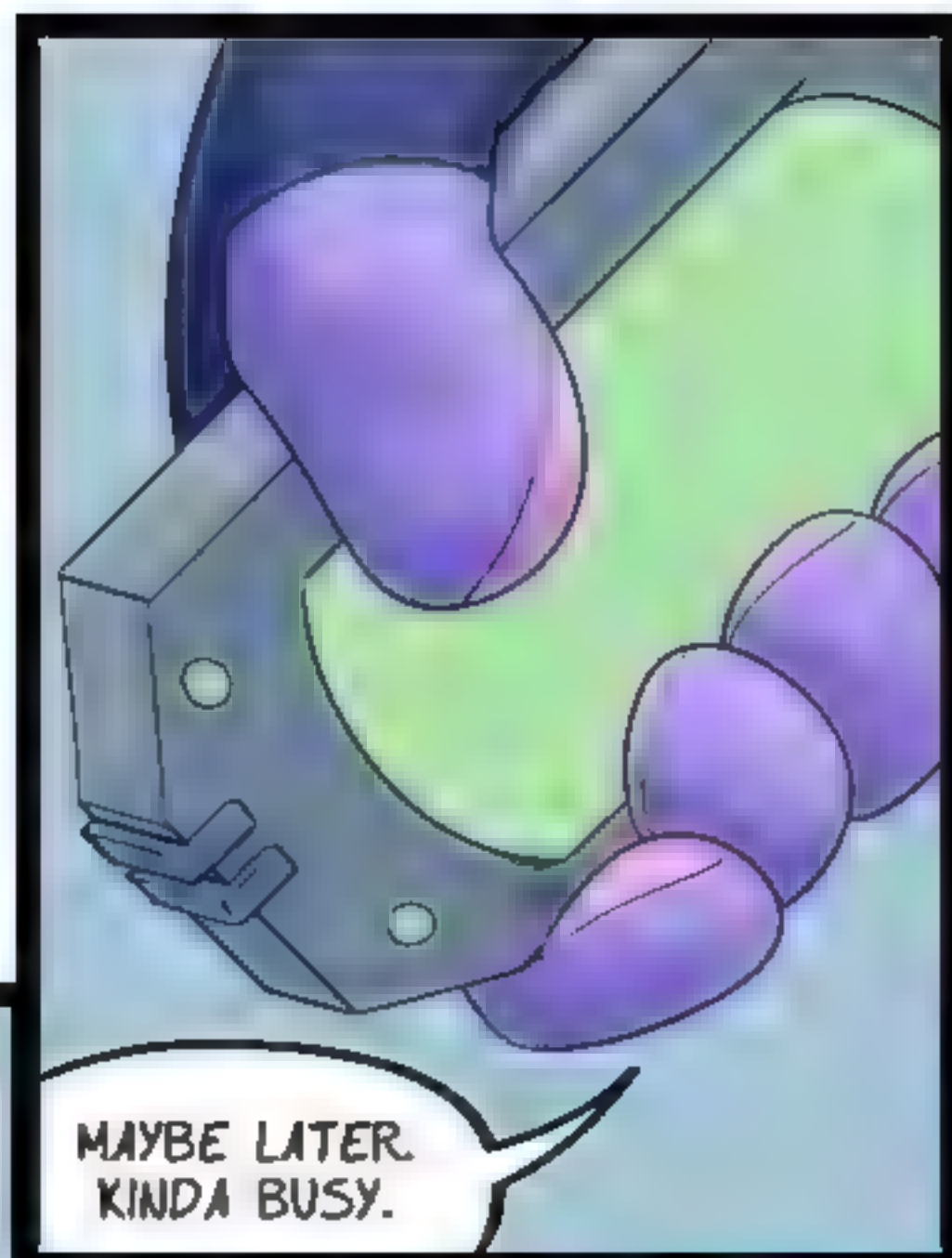




DON'T
DO THAT!

OH! UM,
SORRY.

COULD I
ASK YOU A
QUESTION?



MAYBE LATER.
KINDA BUSY.



I'M WAITING FOR
A PROFESSOR TO
START THEIR MIDDAY
OFFICE HOURS.

'TIL THEN,
ALL I CAN DO
IS SIT HERE
AND STEW.

REALLY?
YOU DON'T
LOOK--



WELL.

IF I SEND
THIS PROFESSOR
YOUR WAY, WILL
YOU DO ME
A FAVOR?

NO, TAZHO,
I --

...WAIT.
FOR REAL?

YES INDEEDY!
WHO DO YOU
NEED?

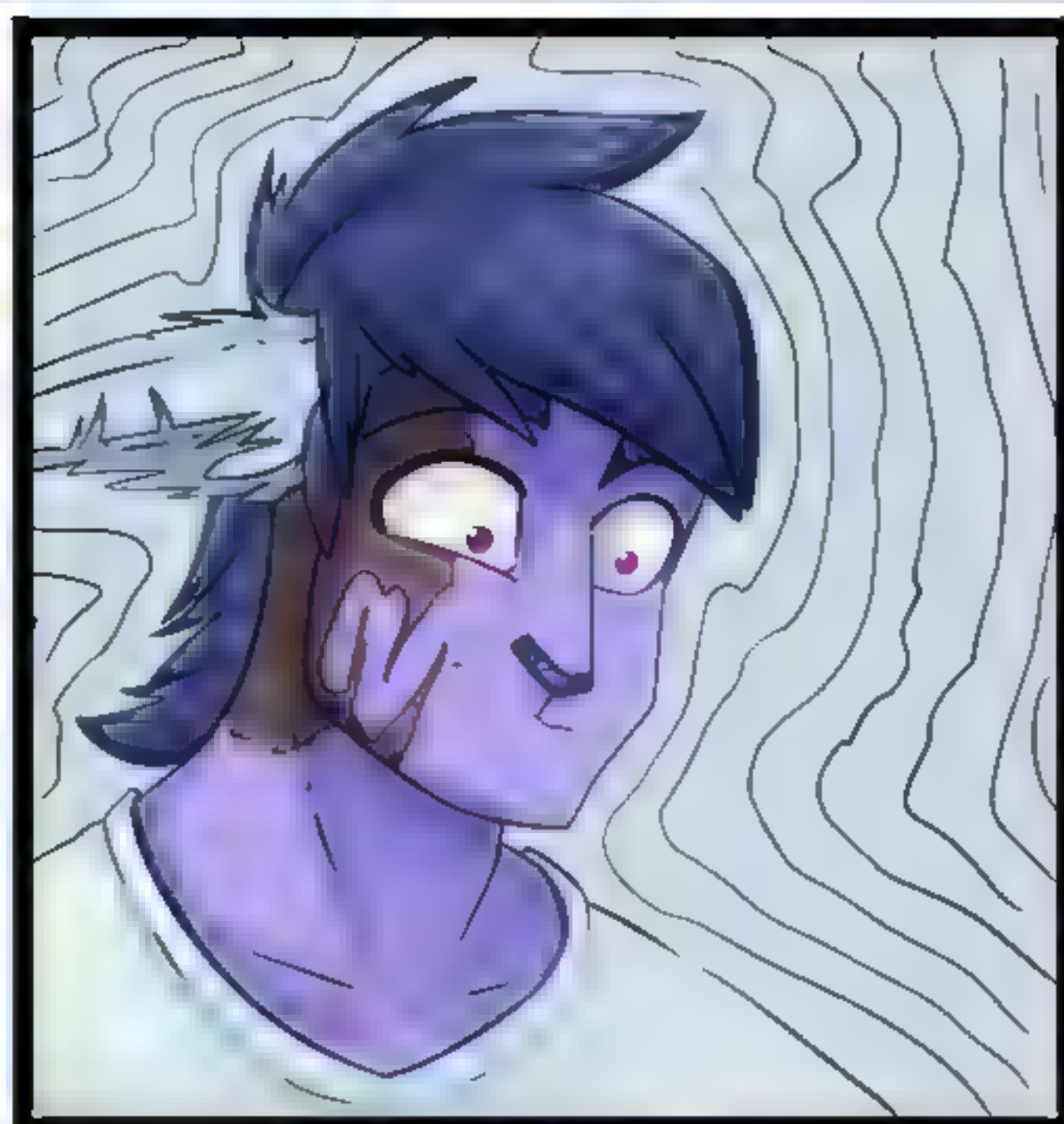


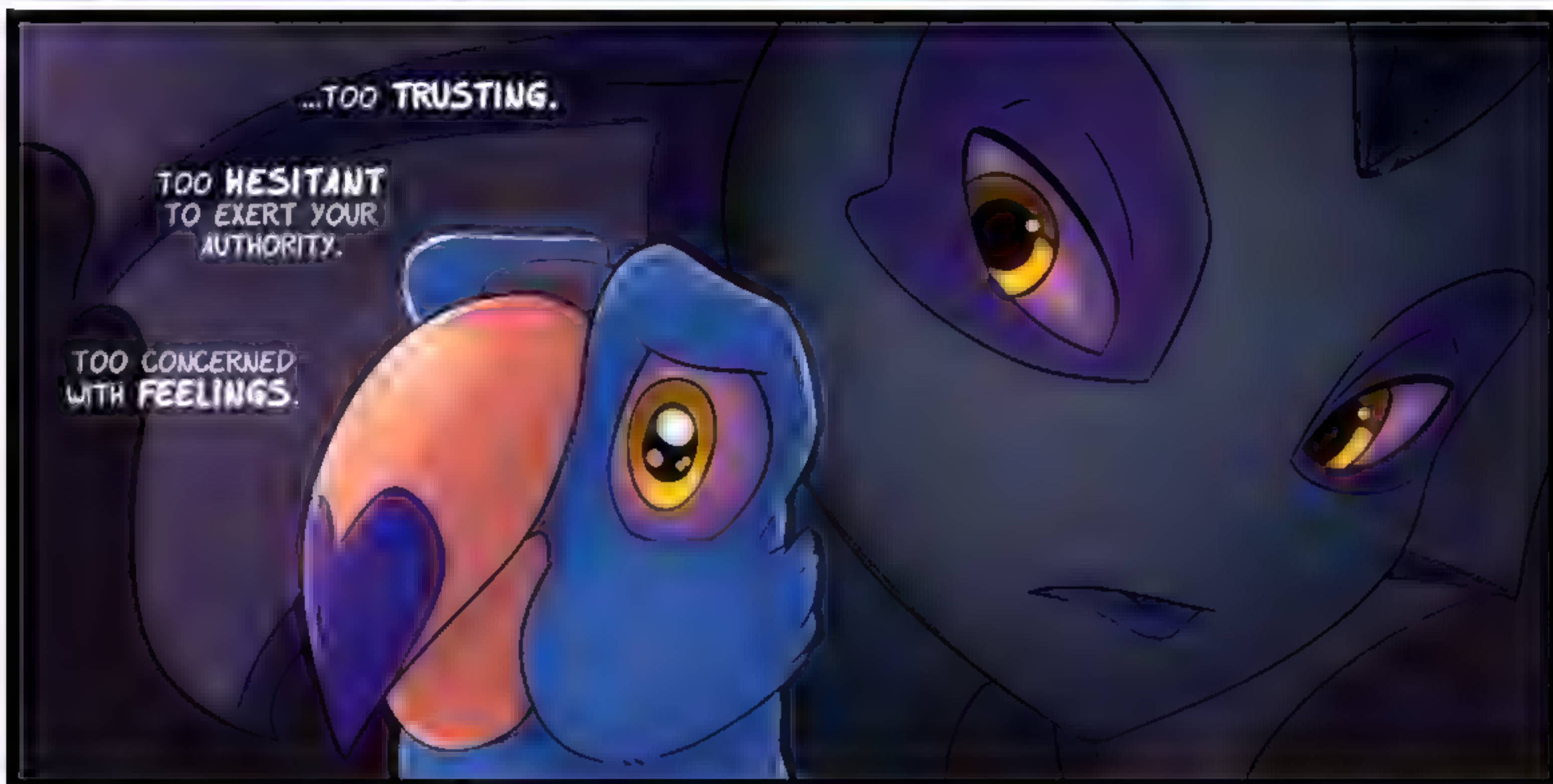
UH--
ANYBODY?

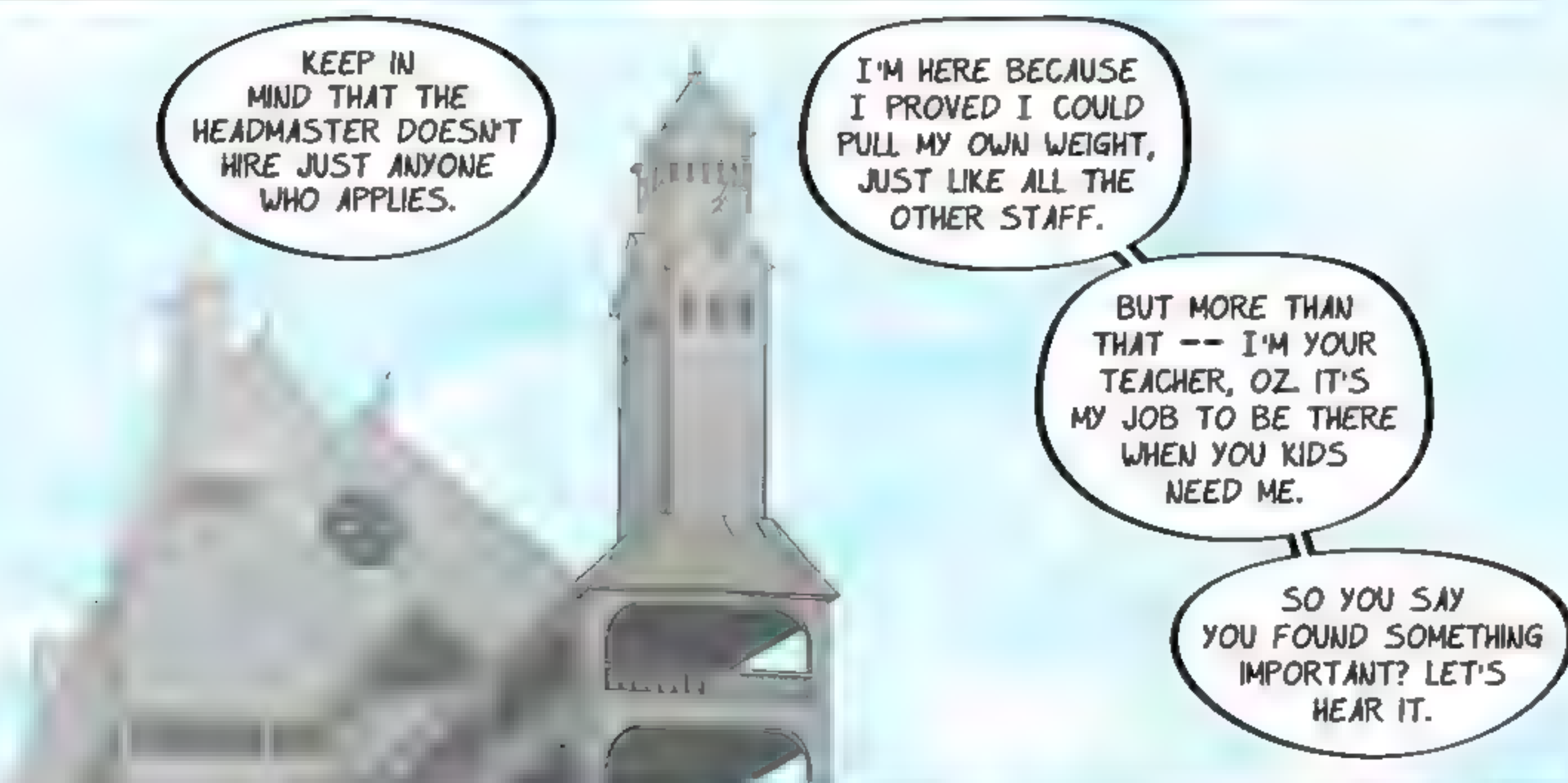
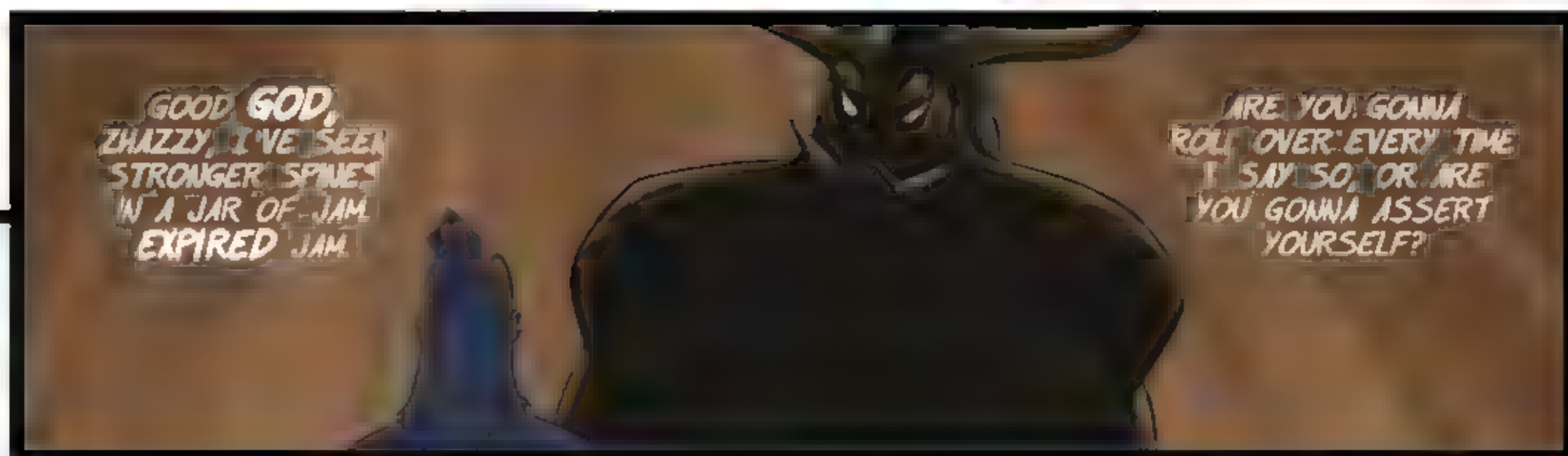
SOMEONE
FROM THE
A.I.S.L.E.
PROGRAM!

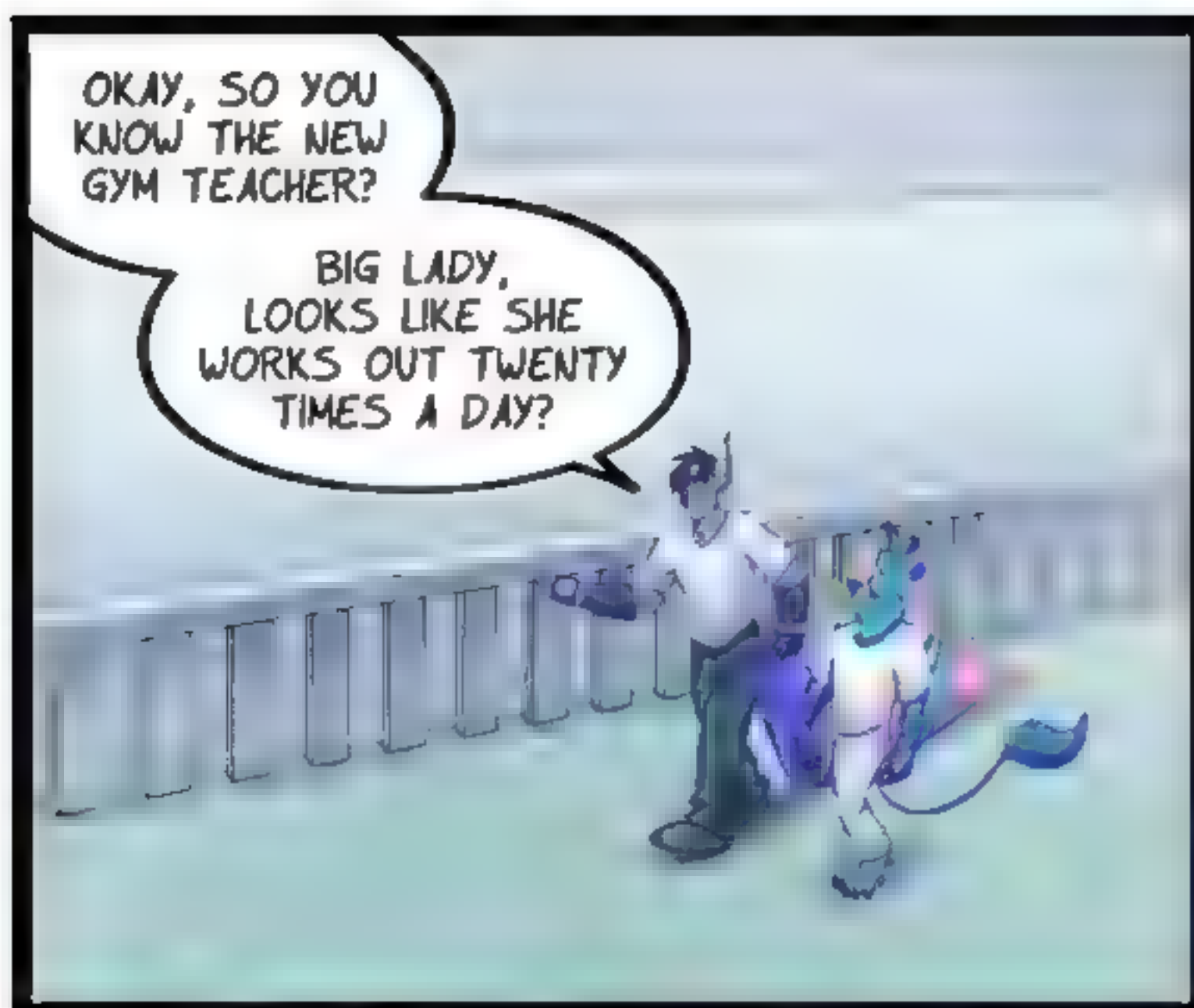
PREFERABLY
HIGH UP THE
CHAIN, TOO.

HOLY **COW** TAZHO,
IF YOU HELP ME OUT
WITH THIS I WILL DO
WHATEVER YOU NEED.











SHE'S A
RHO-DA AGNAI

SHE'S PROBABLY
HERE ON A STING--

A STING OPERATION?
OZ, COME ON, HAVE A LITTLE
FAITH IN THE VETTING
PROCESS HERE.

LIKE I SAID,
THE HEADMASTER
DOESN'T HIRE
JUST ANYONE.



PROFESSOR, IF
THAT WOMAN FINDS
OUT A **FRACTION**
OF WHAT GOES ON
AT THIS SCHOOL--

OZ, LISTEN
TO ME.

EVERYTHING IS
FINE! THE HEADMASTER
HAS IT AAAAAAALL
UNDER CONTROL.

A LOT OF PEOPLE
HAVE GIVEN **YEARS** OF
THEIR LIVES TO MAKE THIS
PLACE A REALITY - AND
TO KEEP IT SAFE FROM
PEOPLE LIKE THE
RHO-DA AGNA.

YOU THINK WE'D
GAMBLE IT ALL AWAY
BY GETTING SLOPPY WITH
BACKGROUND CHECKS?



BUT--

NO BUTS.

SHE REALLY IS
ON OUR SIDE,
YOU'LL SEE.



NOW, ABOUT
THAT FAVOR...



LOOK, OVER-
PROTECTIVE PARENTS
ASIDE, I'M ASSUMING
THIS WOMAN'S AN ADULT
WHO CAN MAKE HER
OWN DECISIONS.
JUST POLITELY
ASK HER IF SHE'S
INTERESTED.

OKAY, BUT
WHAT IF HER
MOM CONVINCES
HER TO SAY
NO--

THEN YOU
POLITELY LEAVE
HER ALONE AND
DON'T BRING IT
UP AGAIN.

REALLY?
BECAUSE I
COULD--

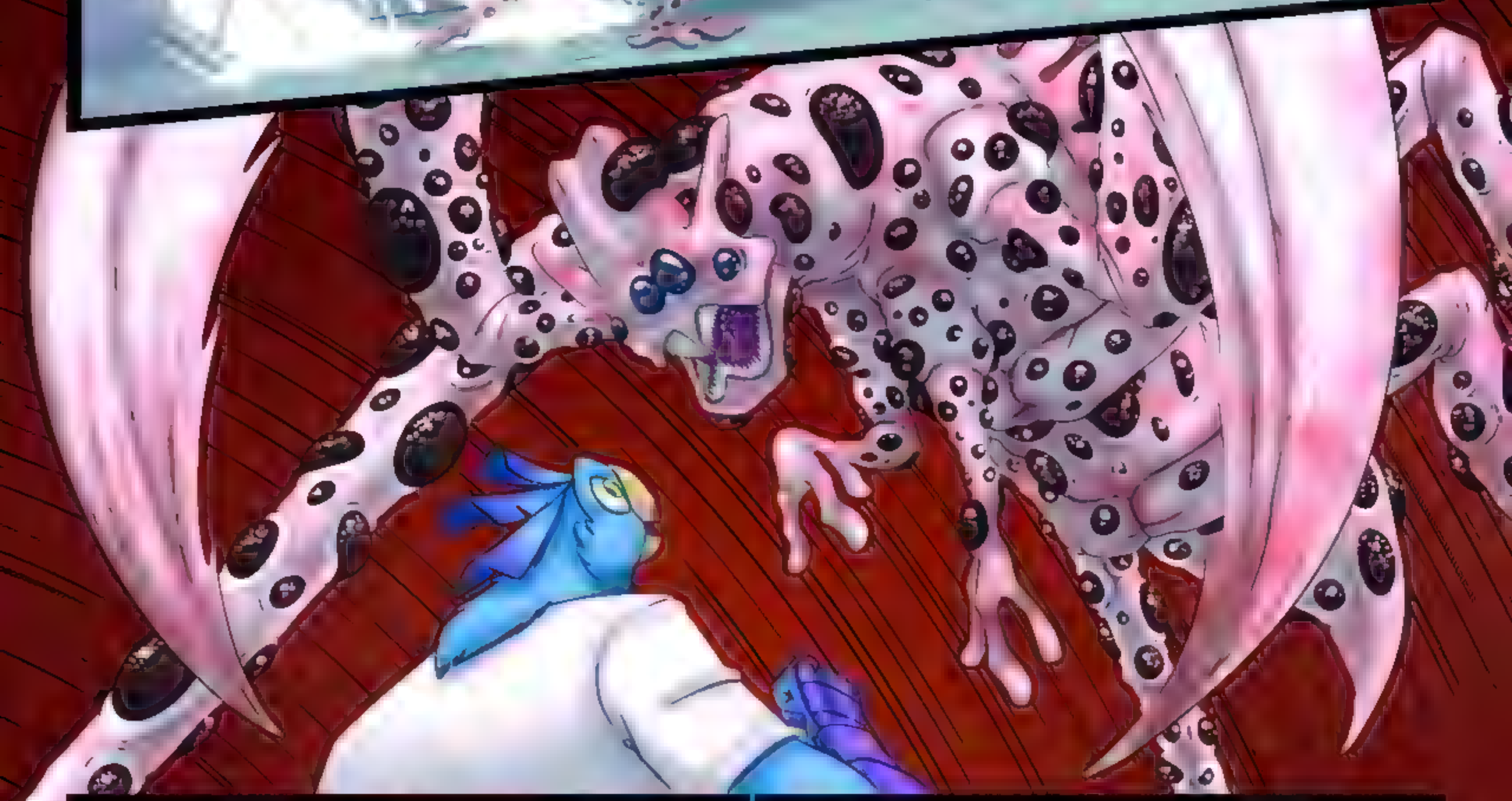
YOU'RE NOT
LISTENING.

LET ME FRAME
IT THIS WAY:

DO YOU WANT
ME TO SHOW WHAT
IT'LL BE LIKE IF THE
RUO-NOKHT ESCAPES
AND COMES FOR YOU?

UHH... NO?
I'M NOT SURE
WHY I'D WANT
TO SEE--







HANG ON,
WHERE'D IT...

...HEY.

HEY, WAIT
A MINUTE.



OZ, THAT
WAS **YOU!**

THAT WAS
AN **ILLUSION!**

THAT WAS
NOT FUNNY!
WHY WOULD
YOU EVEN
DO THAT?



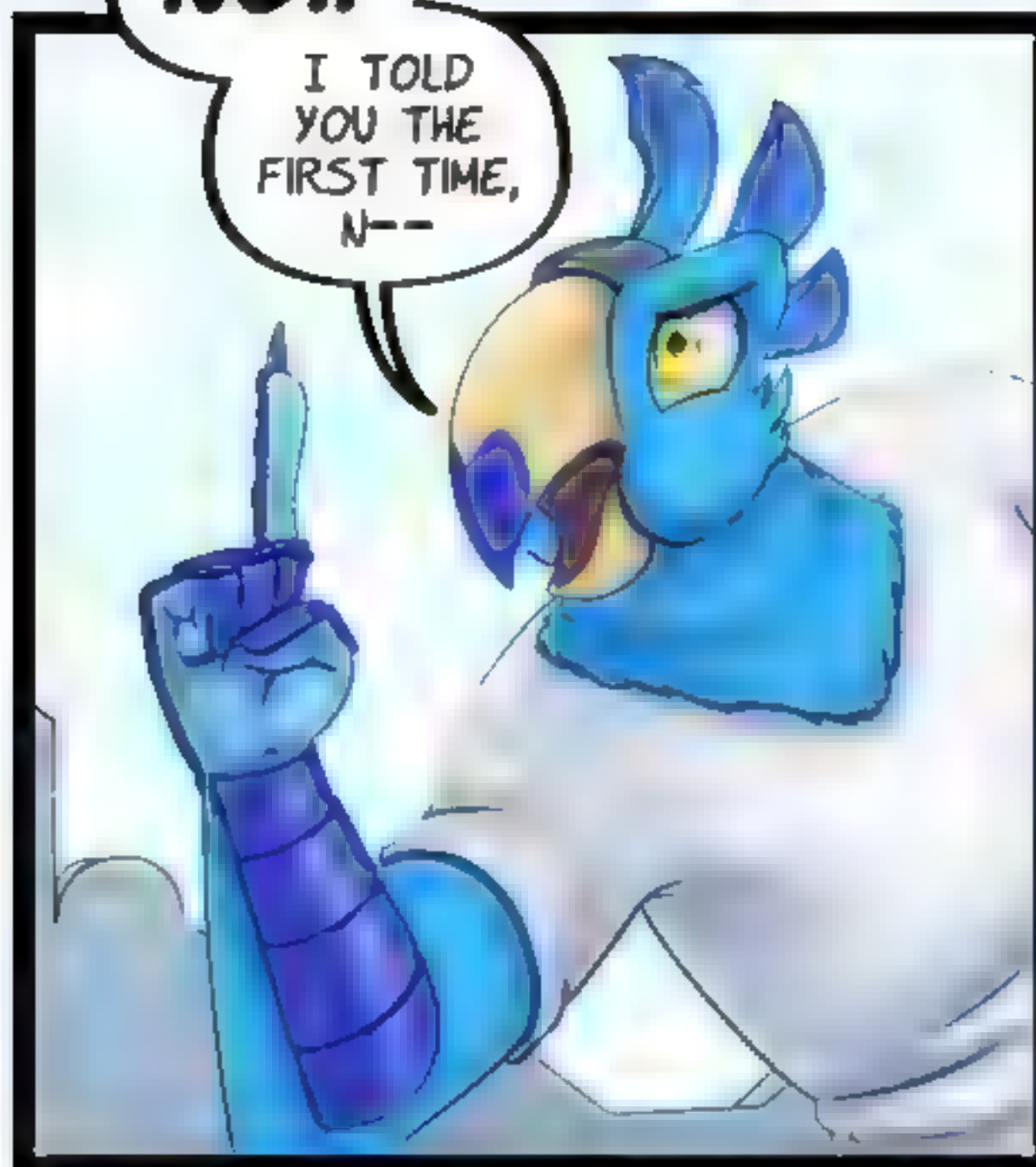
BECAUSE I HAVE
NO TIME FOR THIS AND
I NEED TO DEMONSTRATE
SOMETHING IMPORTANT THAT
YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND.

...PLUS YOU'RE
BLOWING ME OFF
WHEN I'M ASKING FOR
HELP, SO I'M KINDA
PISSED ABOUT IT.

NOW, I'M
GOING TO ASK
YOU AGAIN:

DO YOU
WANT TO SEE
THE RUO-NOKHT
ESCAPE AND--

NO!!



I TOLD
YOU THE
FIRST TIME,
N--



--OOO
OOOOOOO
OOOOOO
OOOH

NO MEANS
NO. YES. I
GET IT.



THAT, UH...
THAT MAKES A
LOT OF SENSE
WHEN YOU PUT
IT THAT WAY.



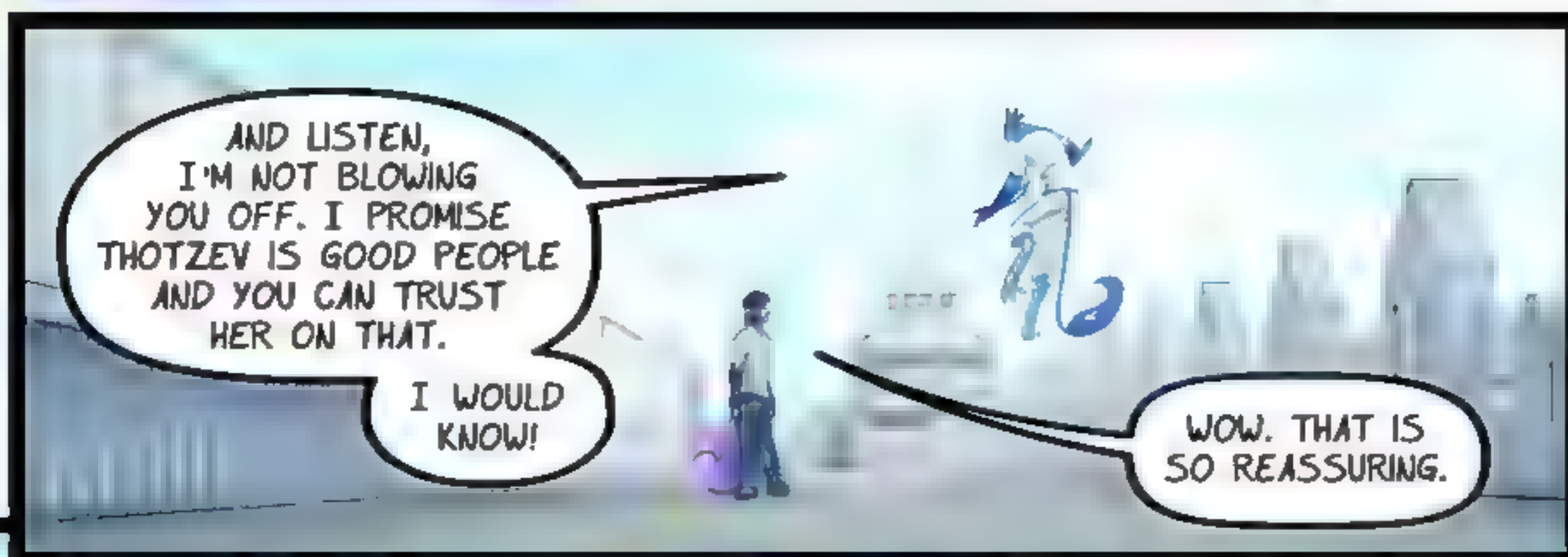
I GUESS
I'LL JUST... DO
ALL THOSE THINGS
YOU JUST SAID!

UHM...

THANKS FOR
THE ADVICE, OZ.
MUCH OBLIGED.



NO PROBLEM,
PROFESSOR, MY
PLEASURE.



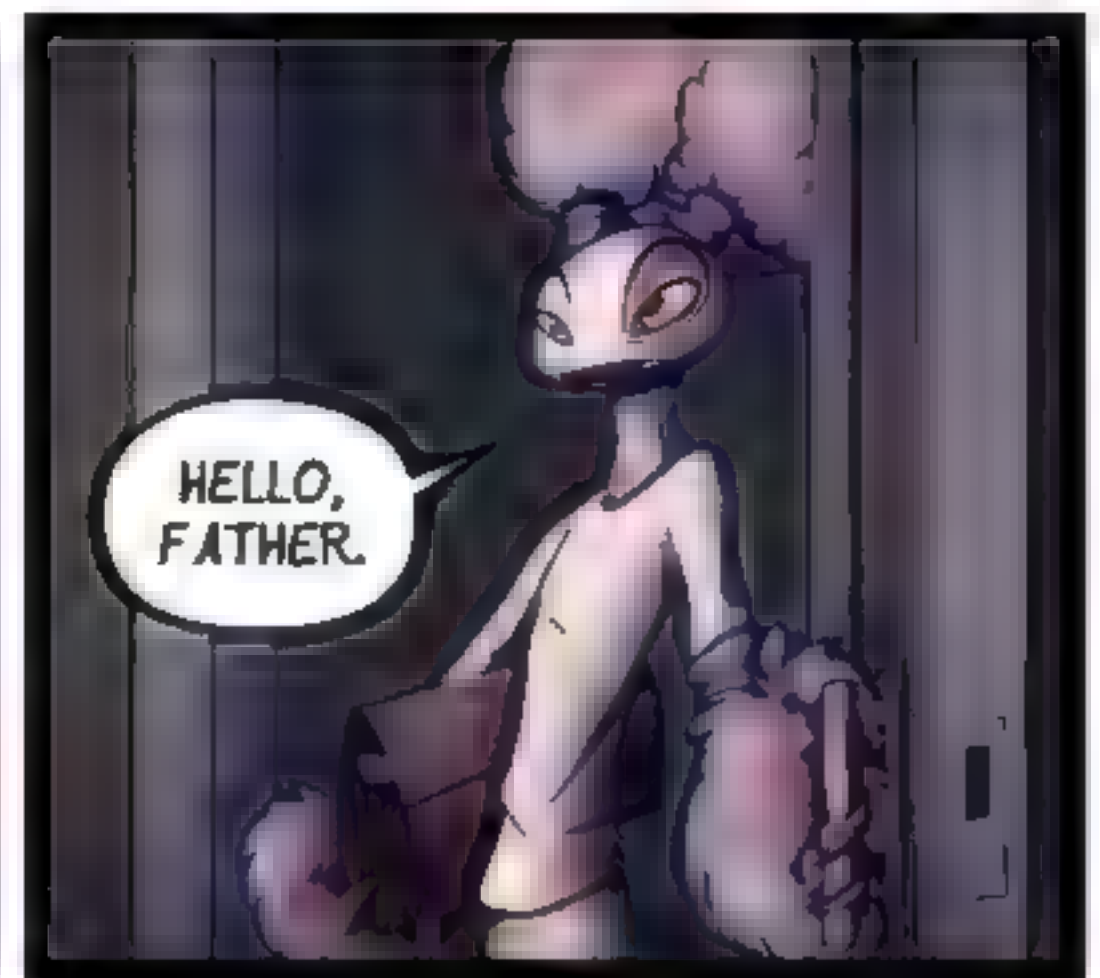
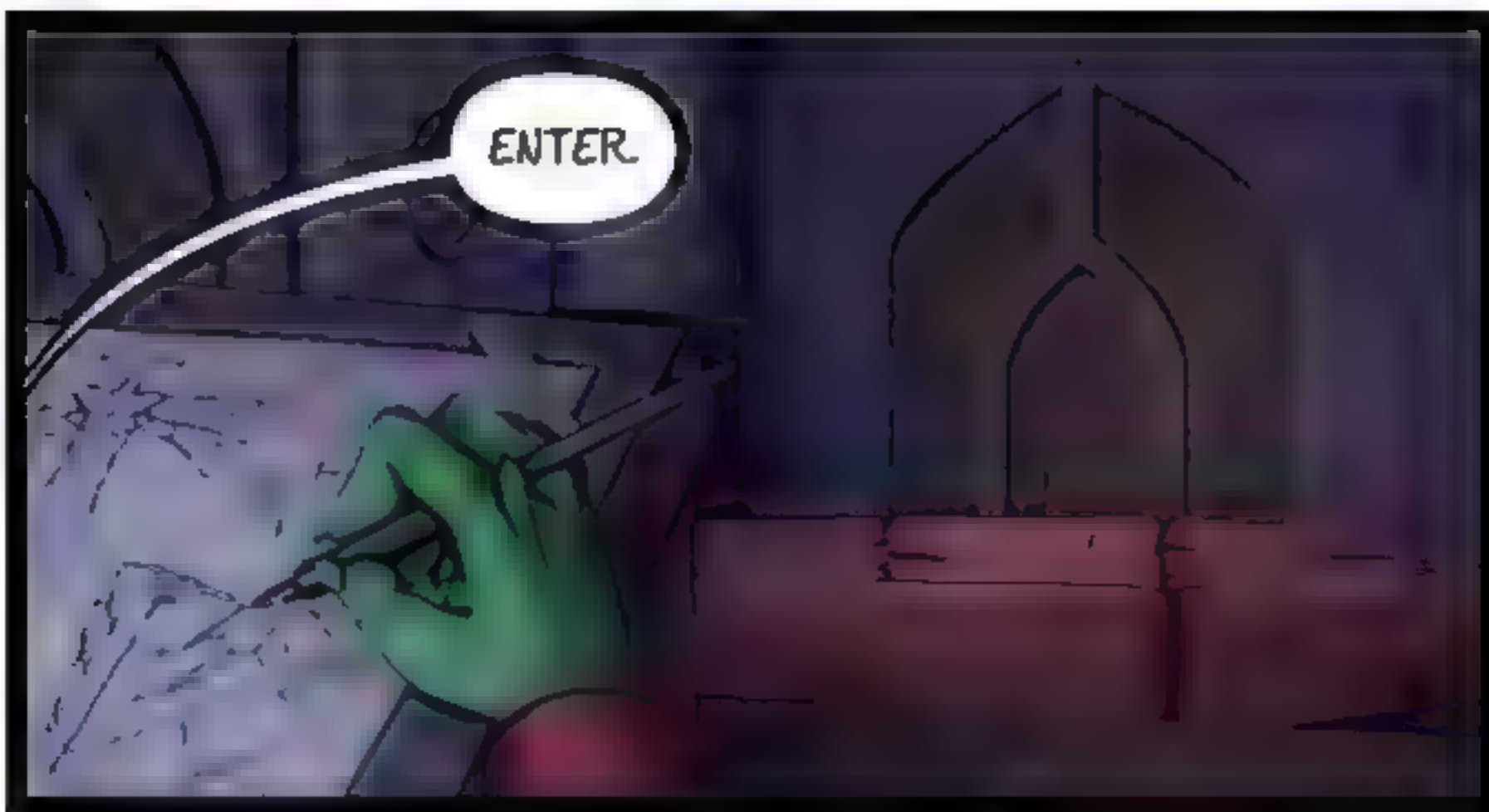
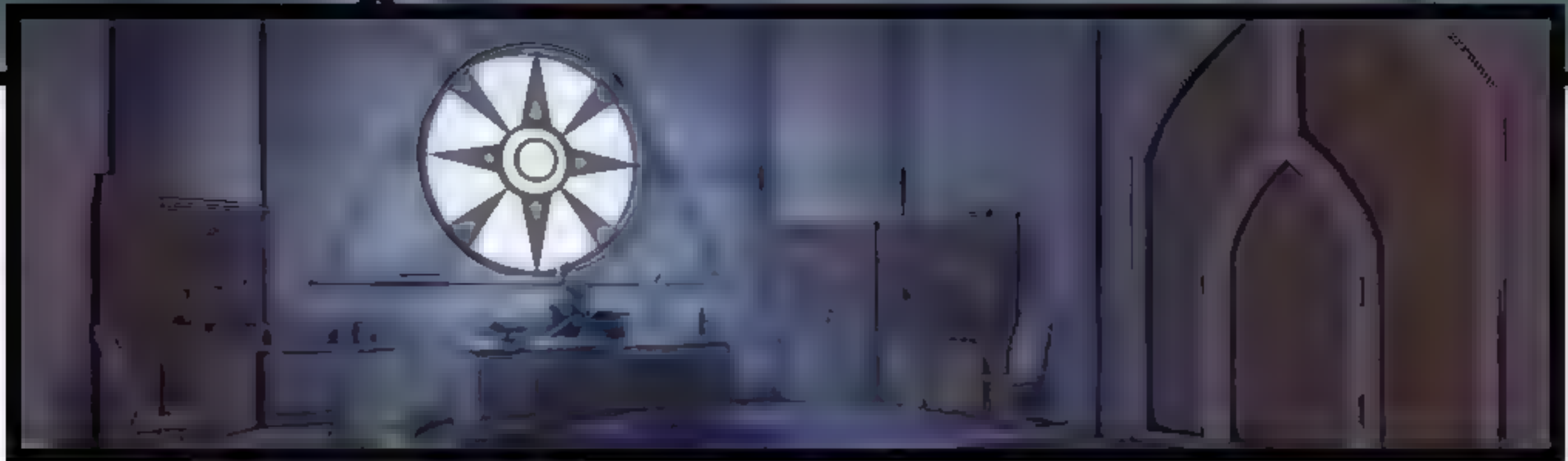
AND LISTEN,
I'M NOT BLOWING
YOU OFF. I PROMISE
THOTZEV IS GOOD PEOPLE
AND YOU CAN TRUST
HER ON THAT.

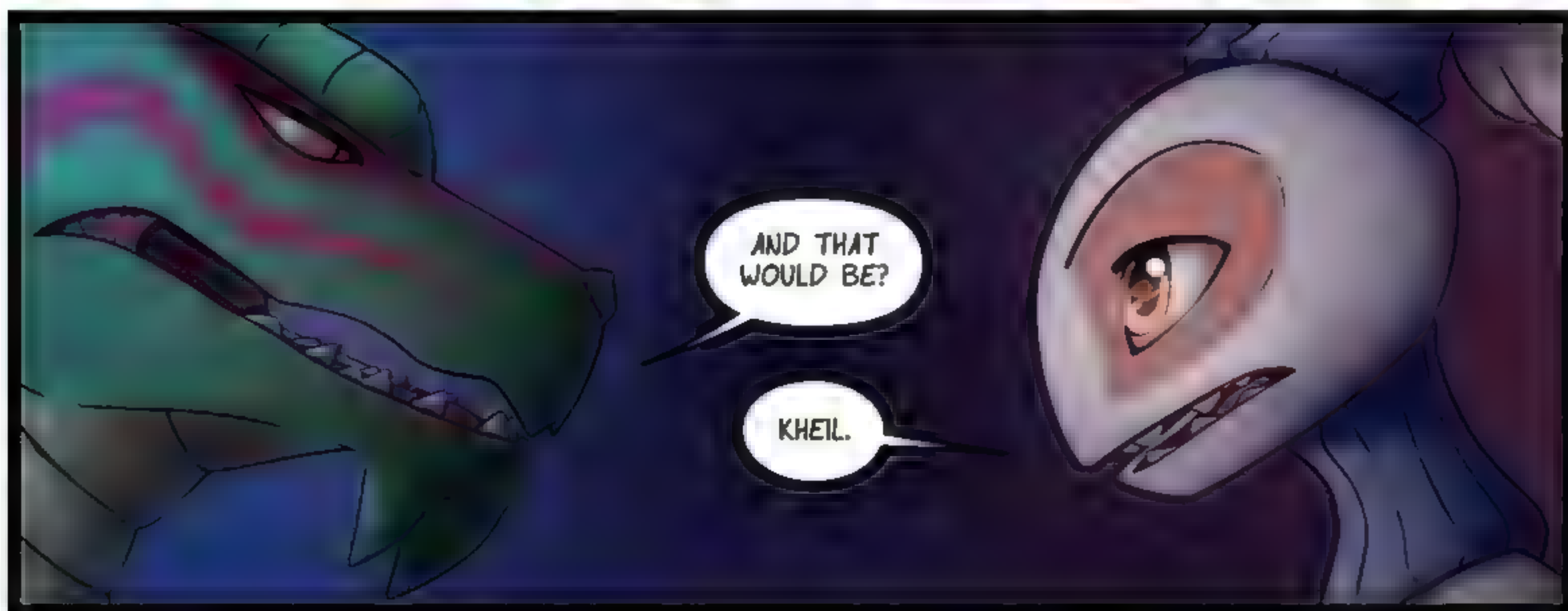
I WOULD
KNOW!

WOW. THAT IS
SO REASSURING.



...WHAT ARE
YOU DOING,
NAZURET?







FALLAN, I AM FAR TOO BUSY TO INDULGE IN PETTY ARGUMENTS TODAY.

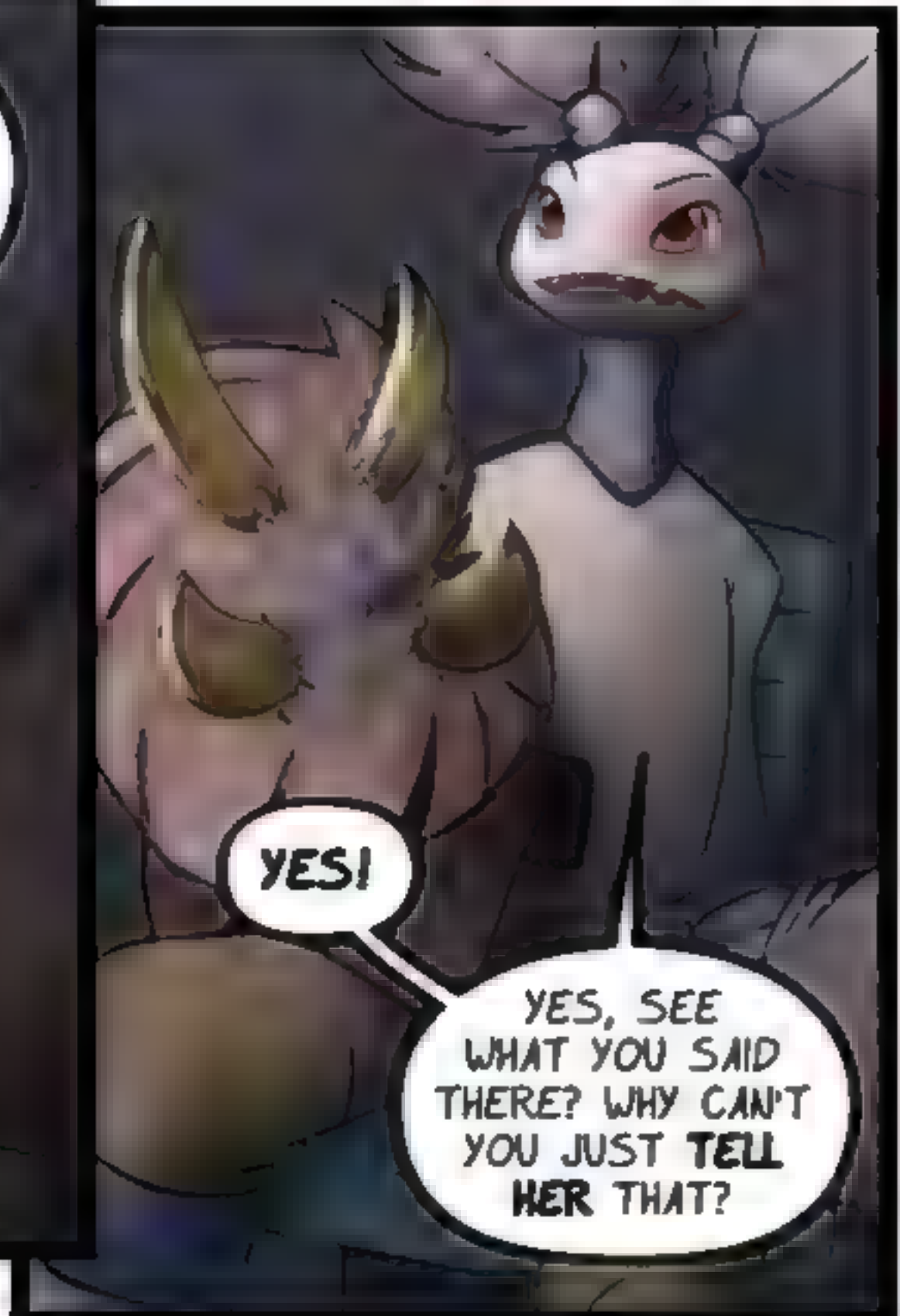


IT'S NOT PETTY, IT'S IMPORTANT! SHE'S--



SHE IS STRONG AND TACTICALLY GIFTED, AND HER EDUCATION WILL CONTINUE TO REFINE THESE QUALITIES.

END OF DISCUSSION.



YES!

YES, SEE WHAT YOU SAID THERE? WHY CAN'T YOU JUST TELL HER THAT?



BECAUSE SHE IS ARROGANT AND HEADSTRONG, AND THAT EGO OF HERS IS A DANGER TO--



EGO?
EGO?



SHE ONLY THROWS
HER WEIGHT AROUND
LIKE A **CIRCUS ACT**
BECAUSE YOU NEVER
SEEM TO NOTICE
WHEN SHE REALLY
DOES WELL!

SHE'S NOT
A **SOLDIER**, SHE'S
A **KID**--



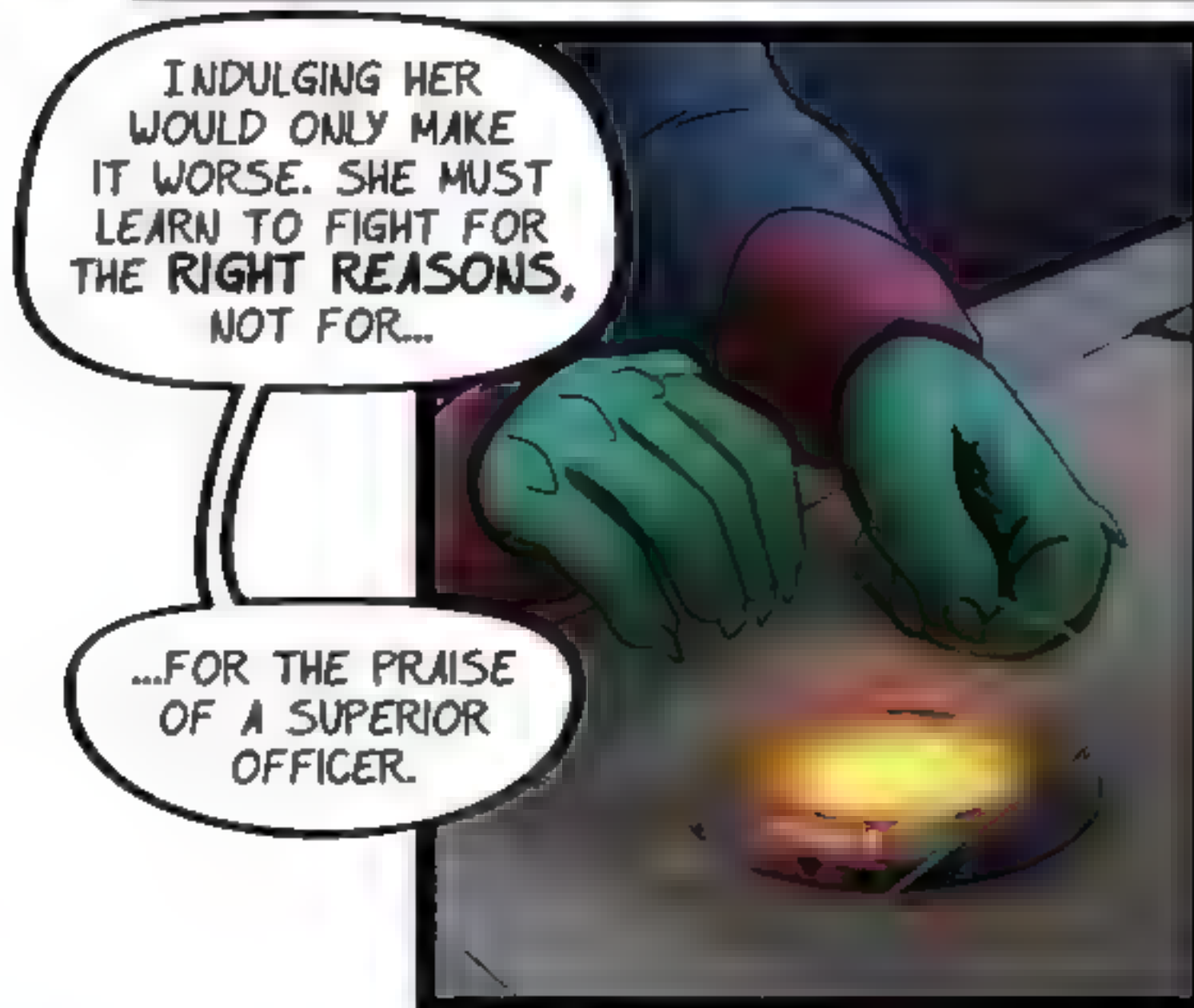
SHE **IS** A SOLDIER,
FALLAN, DO NOT DELUDE
YOURSELF. SHE HAS WORKED
HARD TO MAKE IT SO, AND
HER SKILL IS ADMIRABLE.



BUT THAT SKILL
LED TO ARROGANCE,
WHICH HINDERS HER
ABILITY TO LEAD--



LOOK, I'M JUST
SAYING THAT THIS
PROBLEM MIGHT BE
SOLVED BY GIVING HER
A LITTLE PRAISE EVERY
ONCE IN A WHILE. IS
THAT SO BAD?



INDULGING HER
WOULD ONLY MAKE
IT WORSE. SHE MUST
LEARN TO FIGHT FOR
THE **RIGHT REASONS**,
NOT FOR...

...FOR THE PRAISE
OF A SUPERIOR
OFFICER.



WAY TO
DODGE THE
POINT, DAD.



LOOK, LOGISTICS
ASIDE -- SHE'S
ALWAYS A BALL OF
STRESS WHEN I
VISIT, AND THAT'S
JUST UNHEALTHY.



THE TRAINING
IS STRESSFUL.
IT IS PART OF
THE LIFESTYLE.

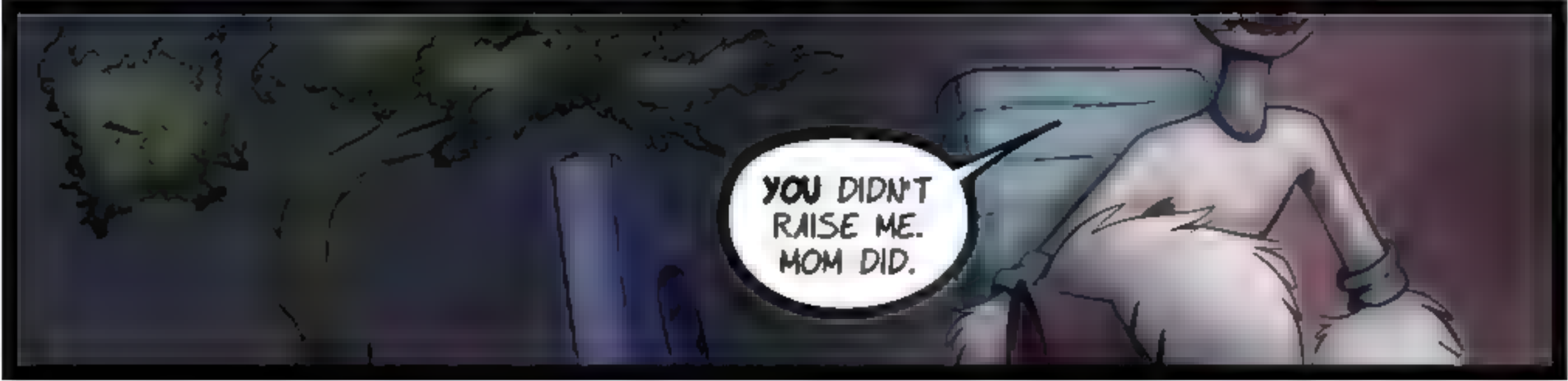


NO, NOT LIKE
THIS! SHE **LIKES** THE
TRAINING! SHE **LIKES**
THE PEOPLE AND
THE ENERGY!

IF YOU
WOULD JUST--
I DON'T KNOW, SAY
"GOOD JOB" ONCE
IN A WHILE--

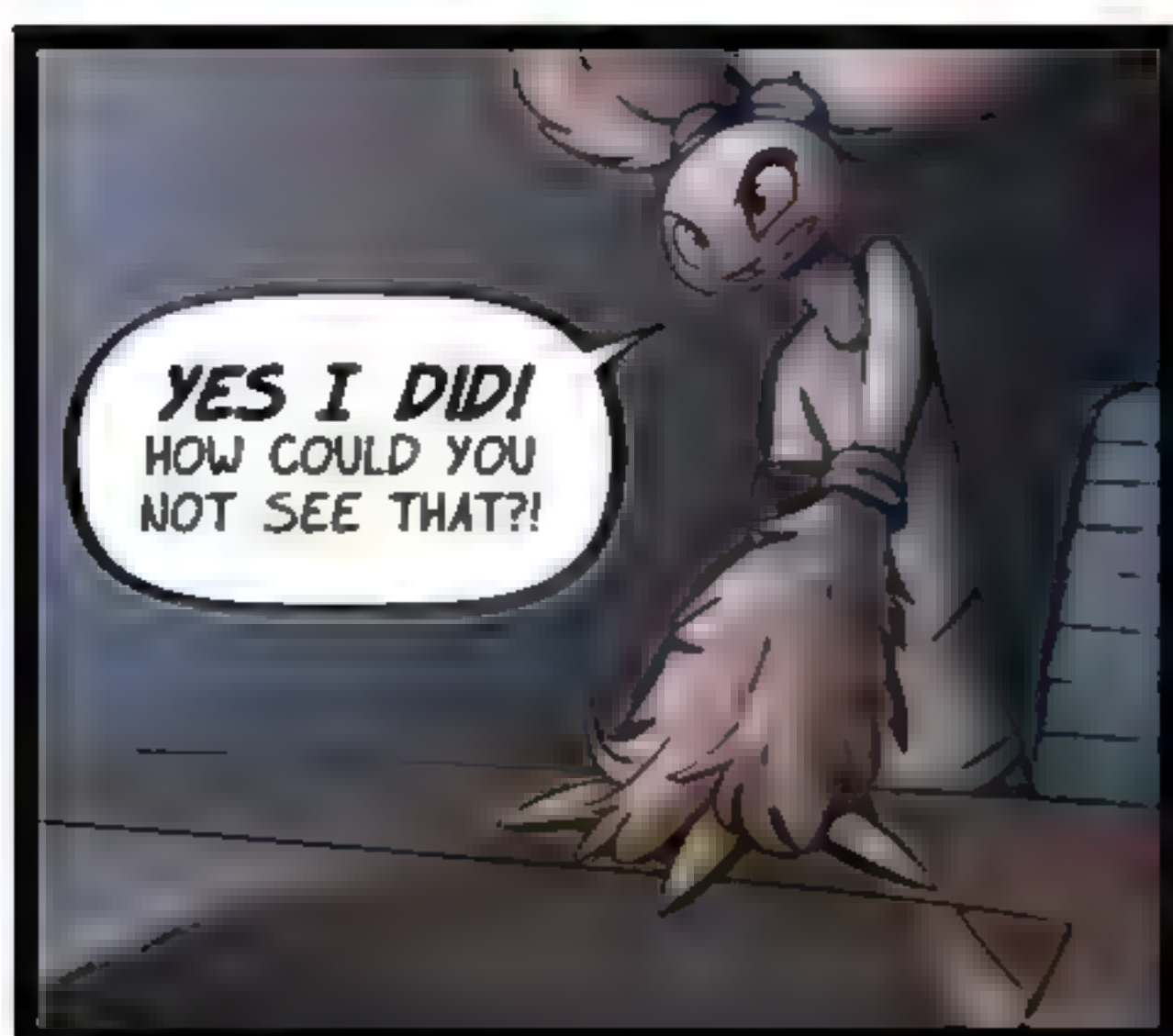


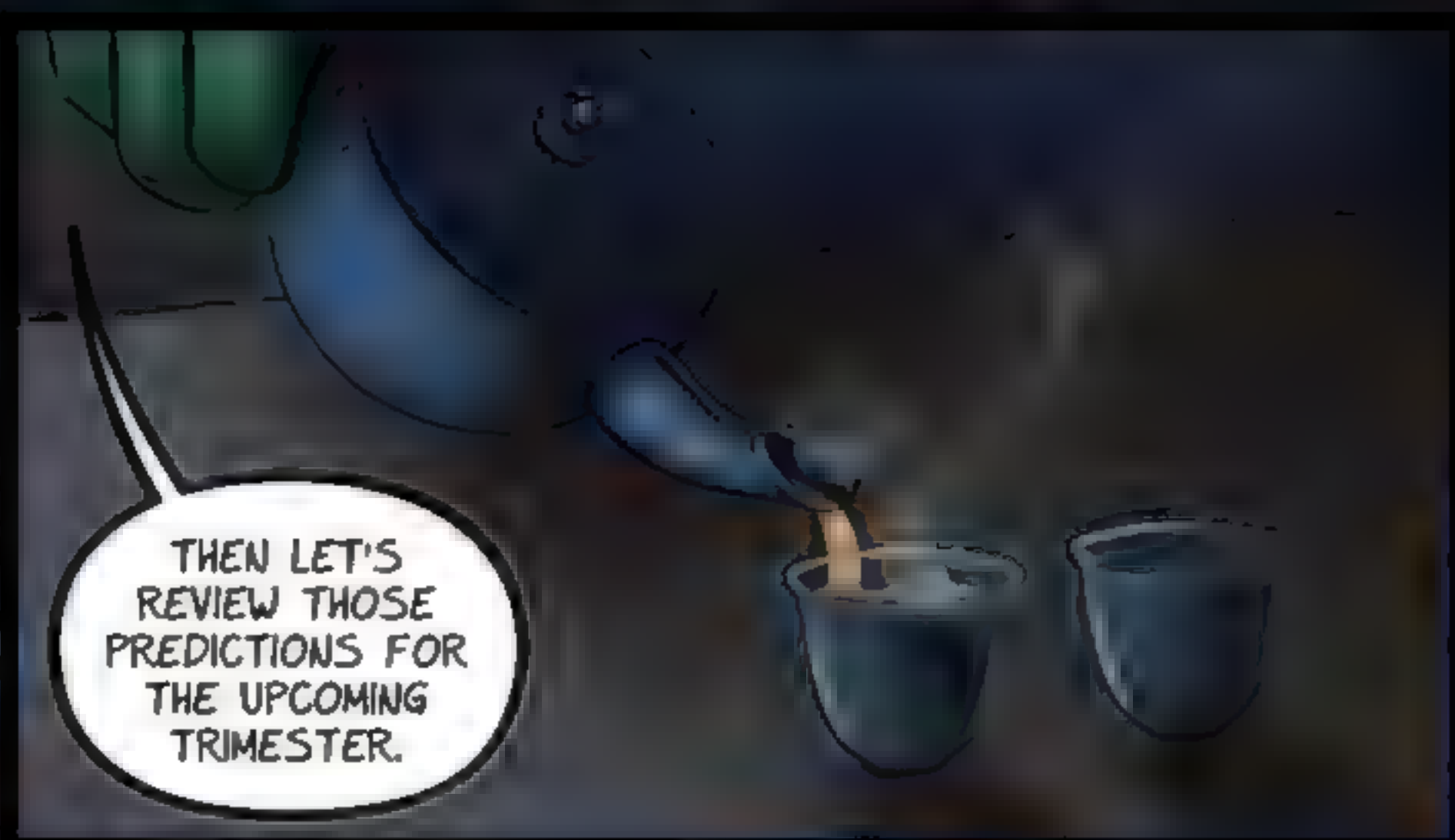
YOU WEREN'T
CODDLED EITHER,
AND YOU TURNED
OUT FINE.



YOU DIDN'T
RAISE ME.
MOM DID.

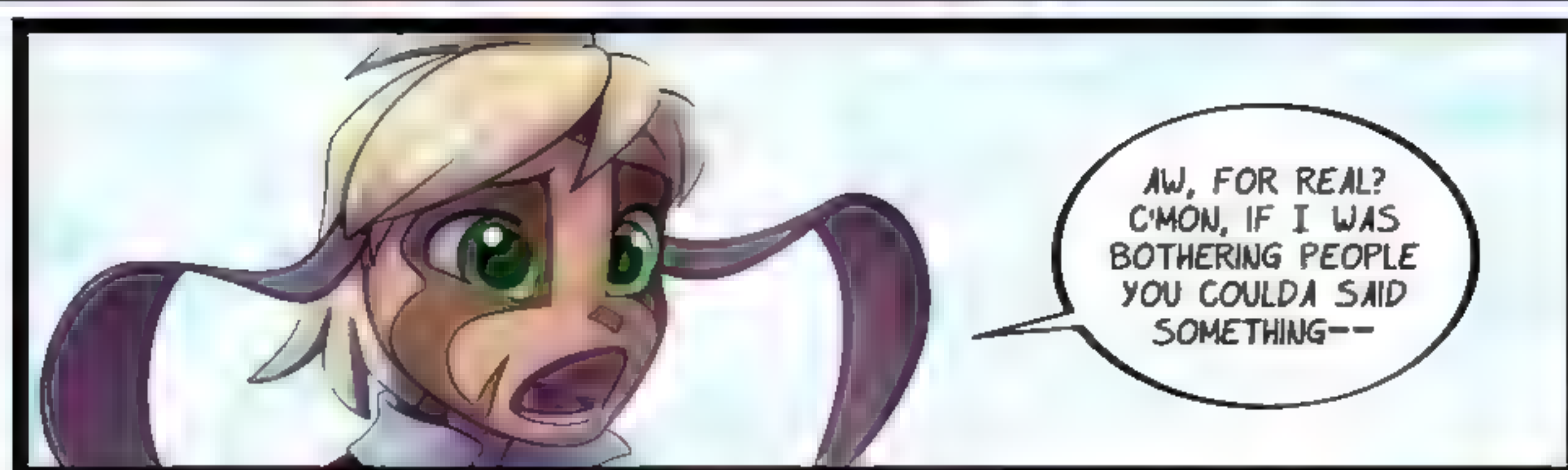
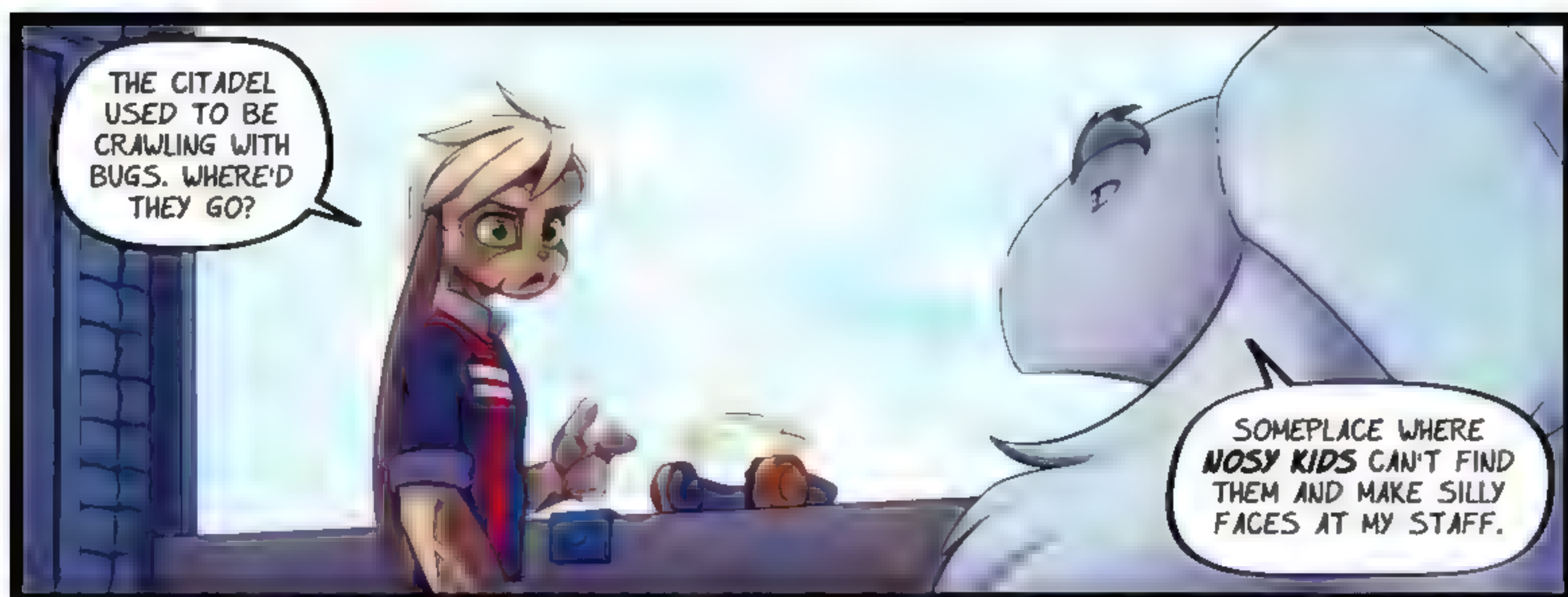


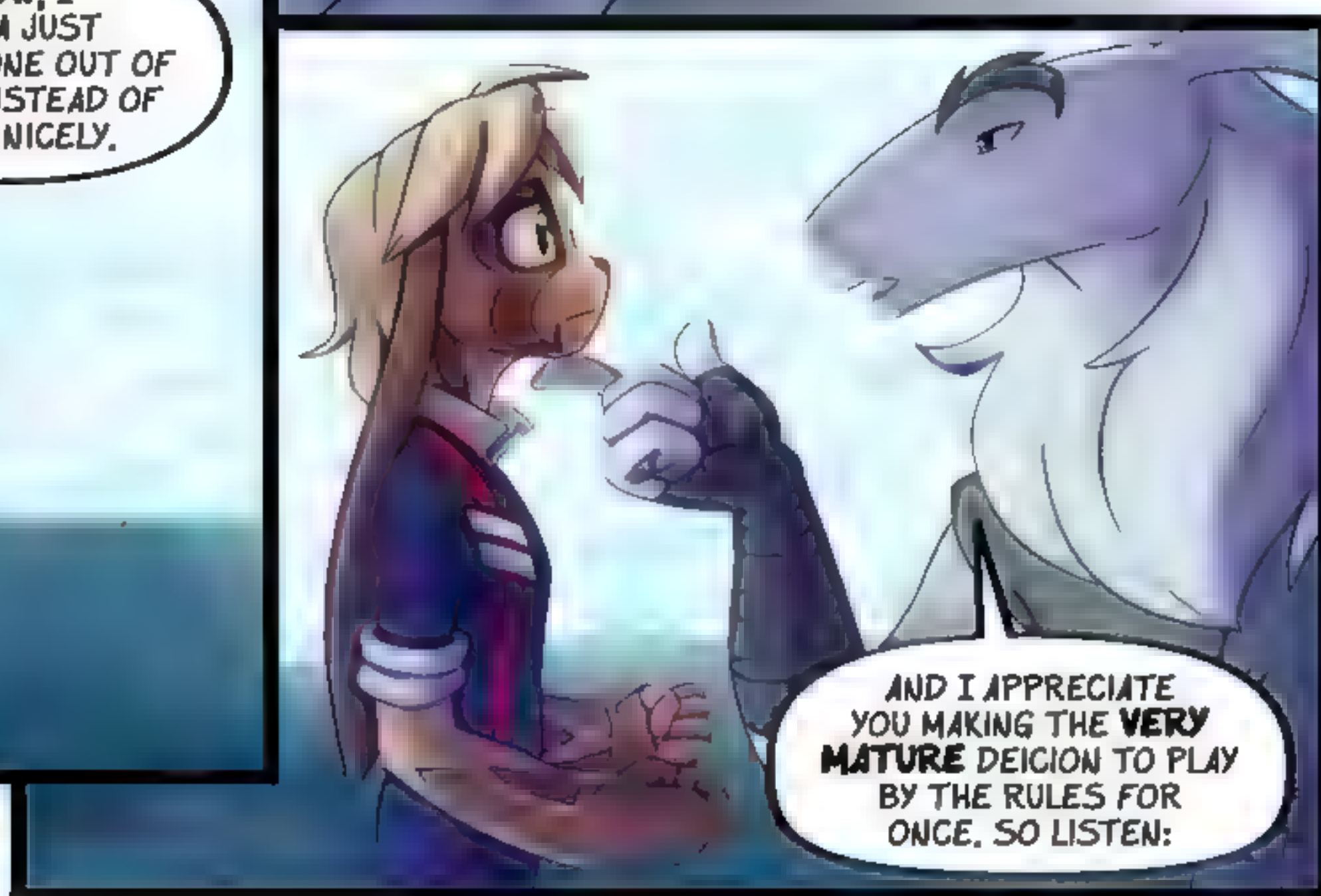
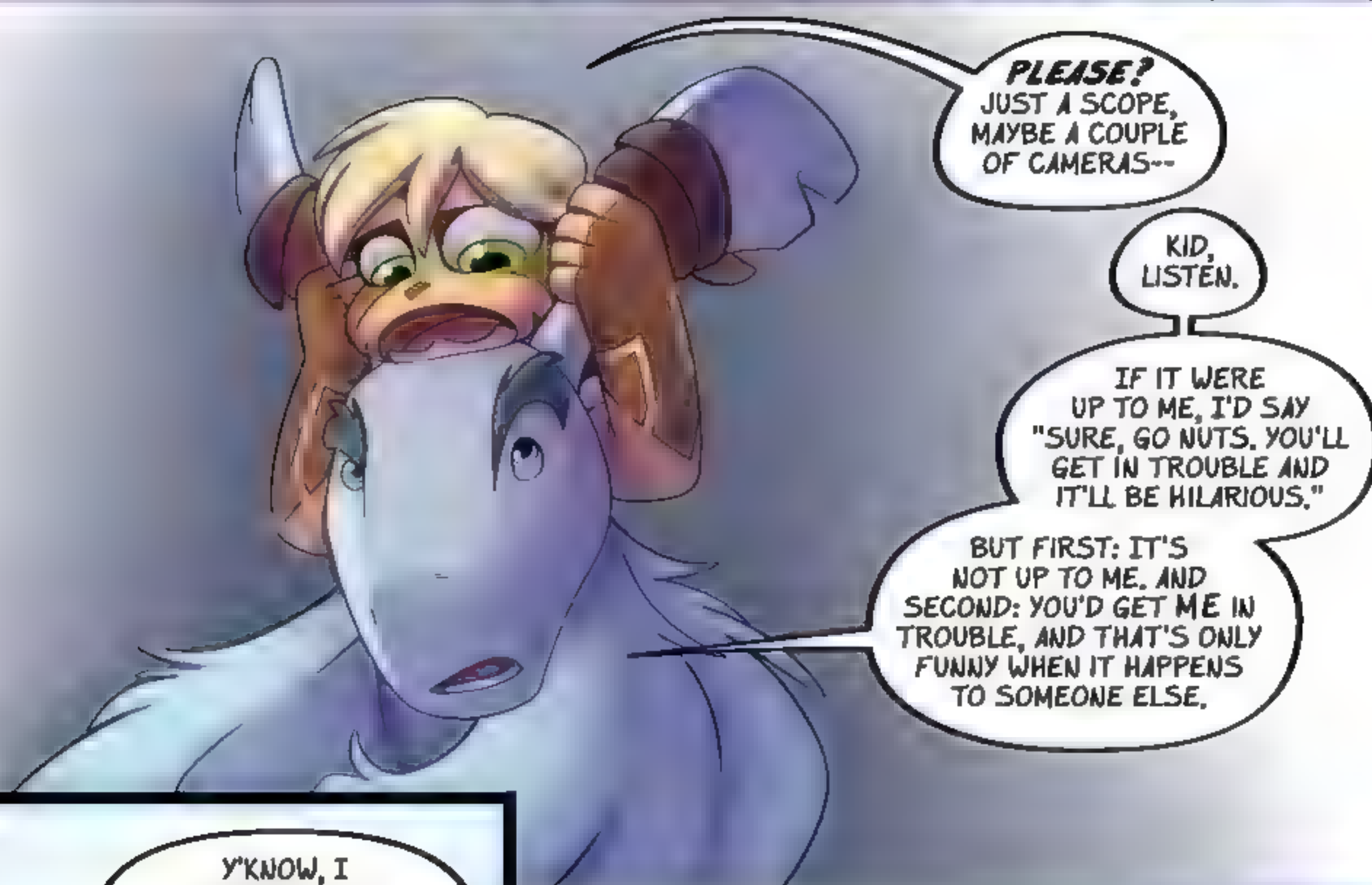




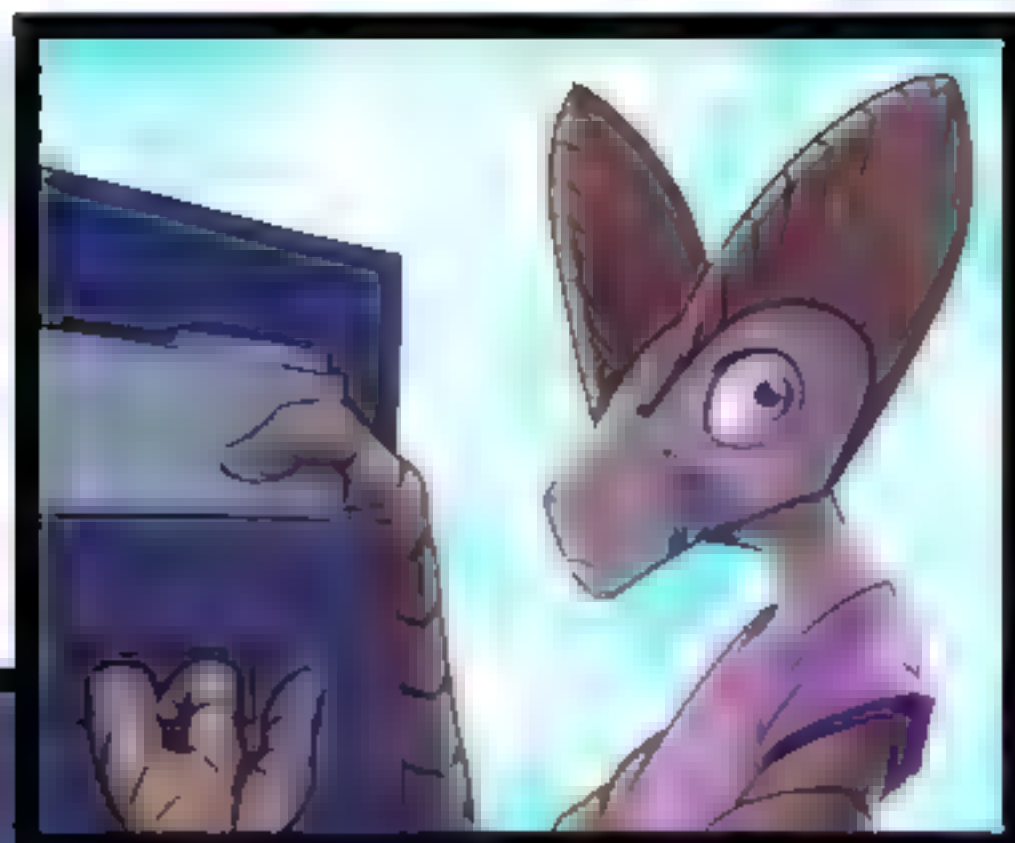
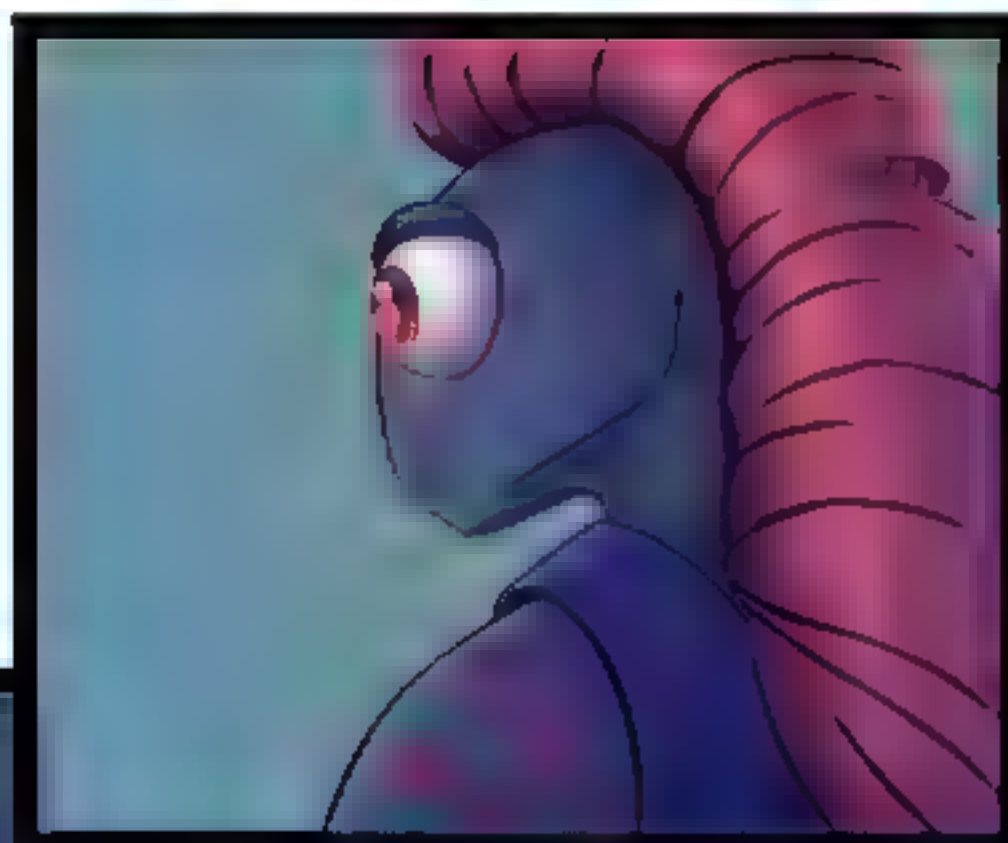
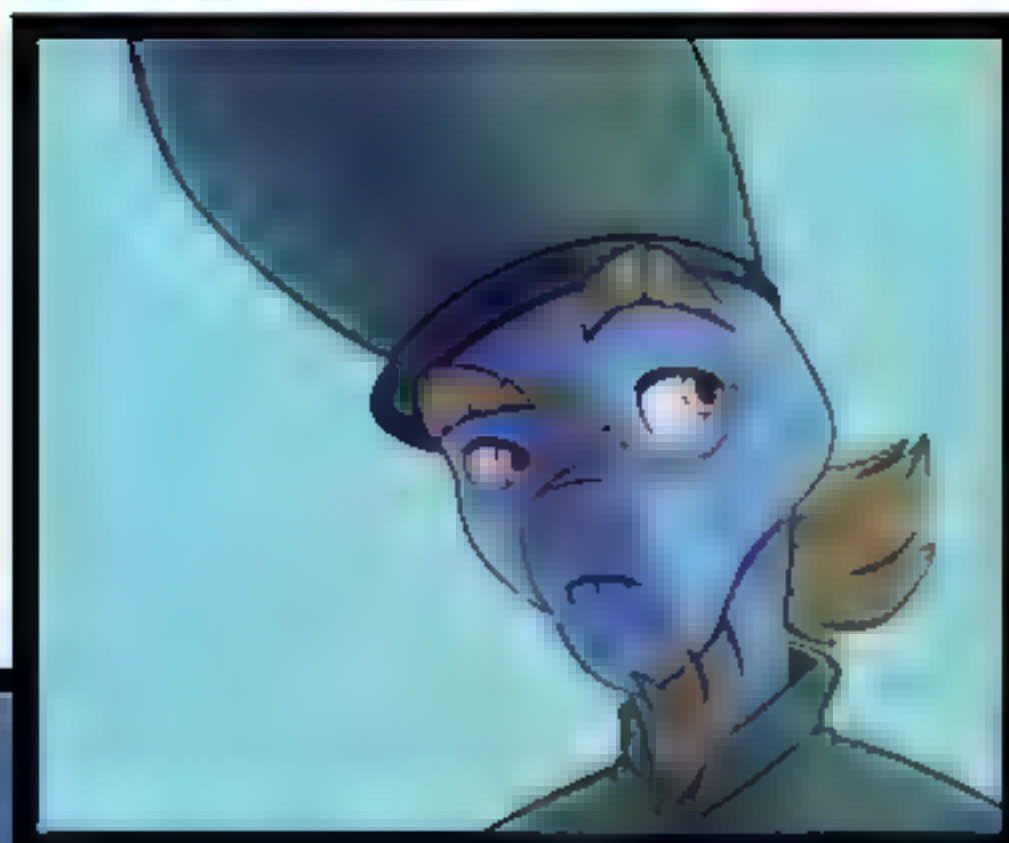














M-MOVING VEHICLES
OF THAT SPEED--

HGKI!

--SHOULD
BE **BANNED**.



W-WHAT'S NEXT
ON THE... ON THE
SCHEDULE?

THAT WOULD
BE THE CONTROL
CENTER, WHICH IS
THAT BUILDING
OVER THERE.

BUT I THINK WE
SHOULD PRIORITIZE
LETTING YOU, UH...
CATCH YOUR
BREATH.

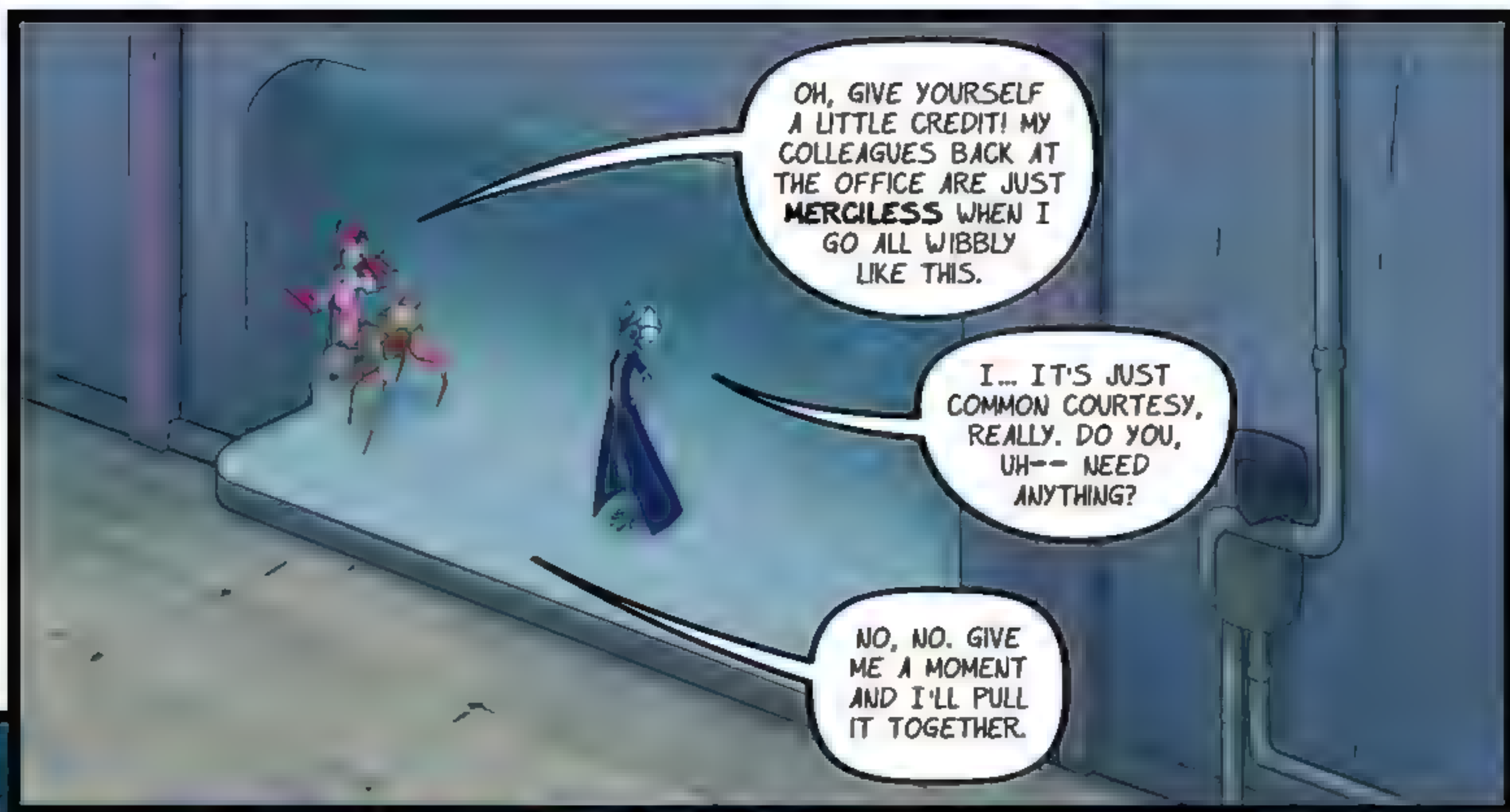


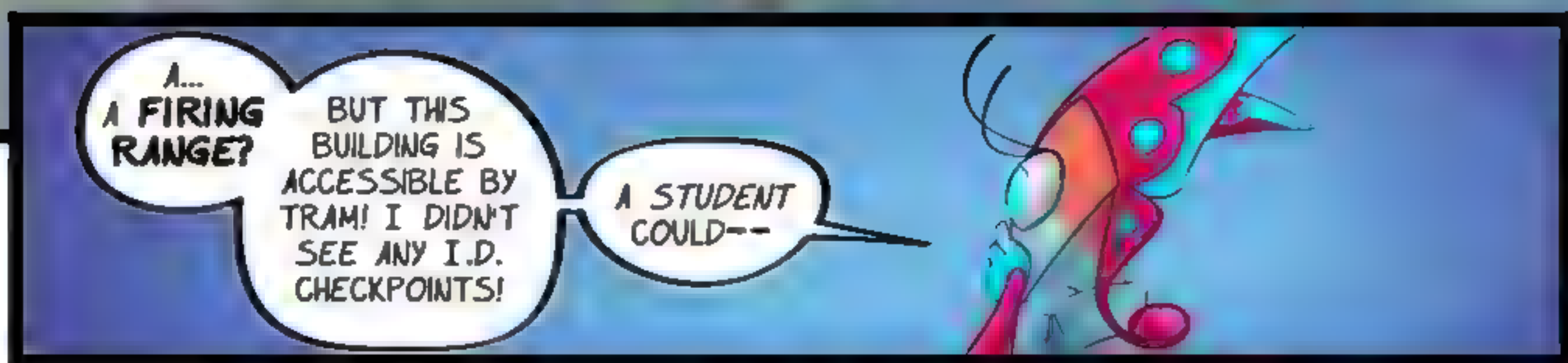
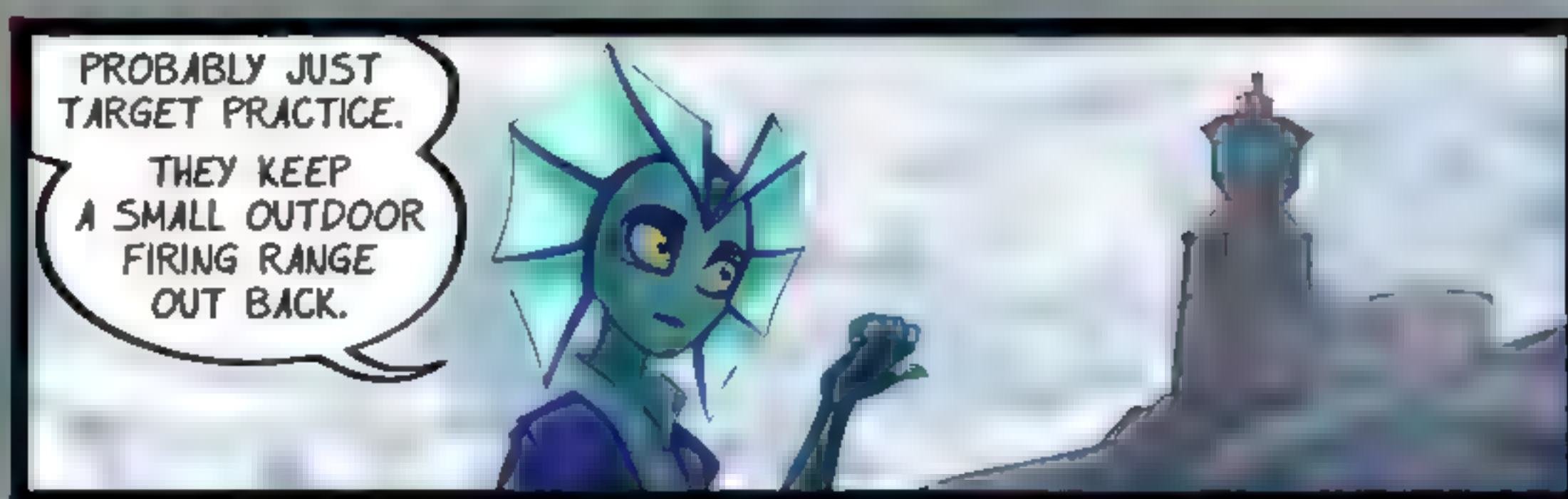
AWW, YOU
DO CARE.

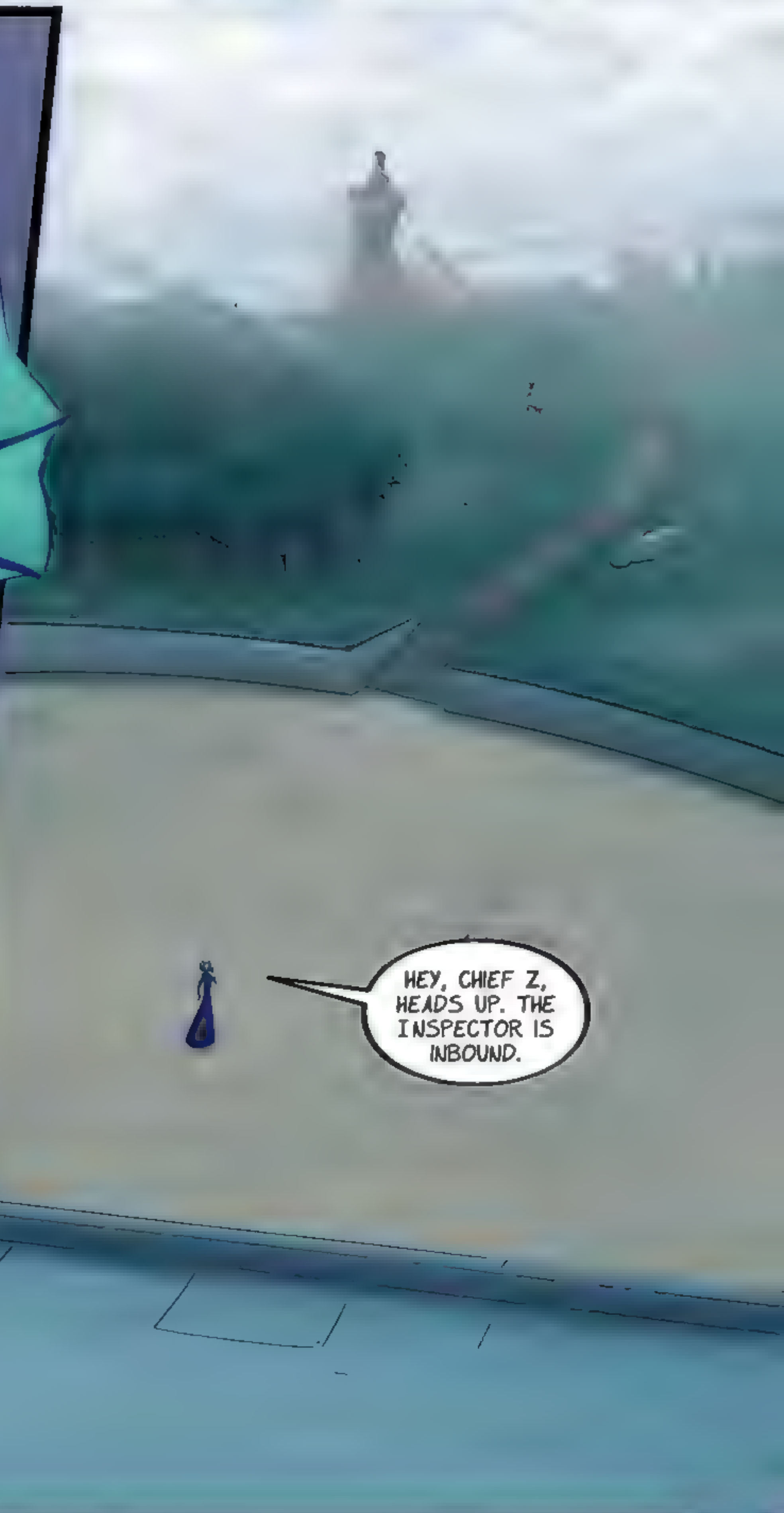
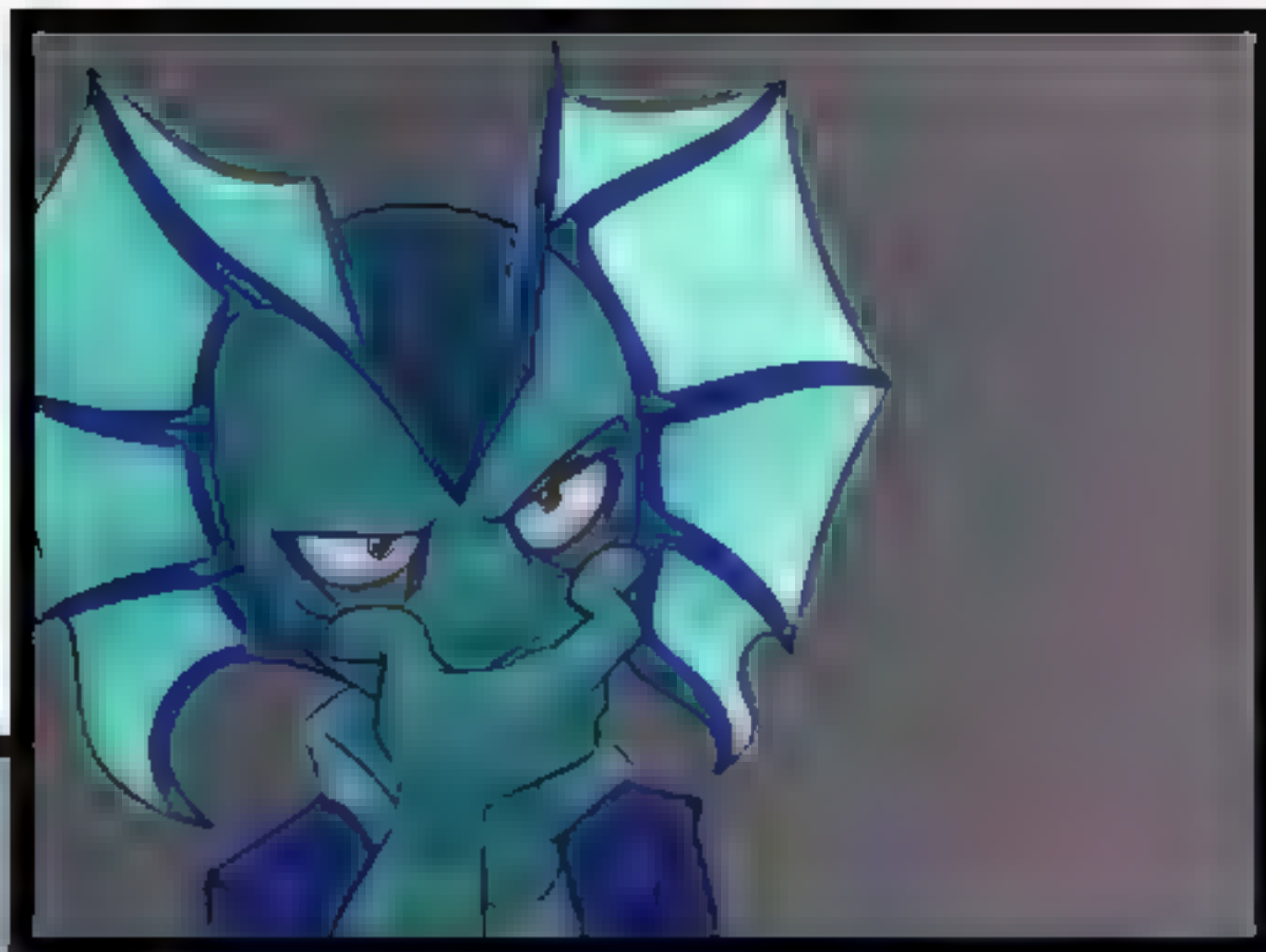
HRKI!
BIT OF A
SECRET SWEETIE,
AREN'T YOU? BRISK
BUSINESS ON THE
OUTSIDE, HEART
OF GOLD ON
THE INSIDE?

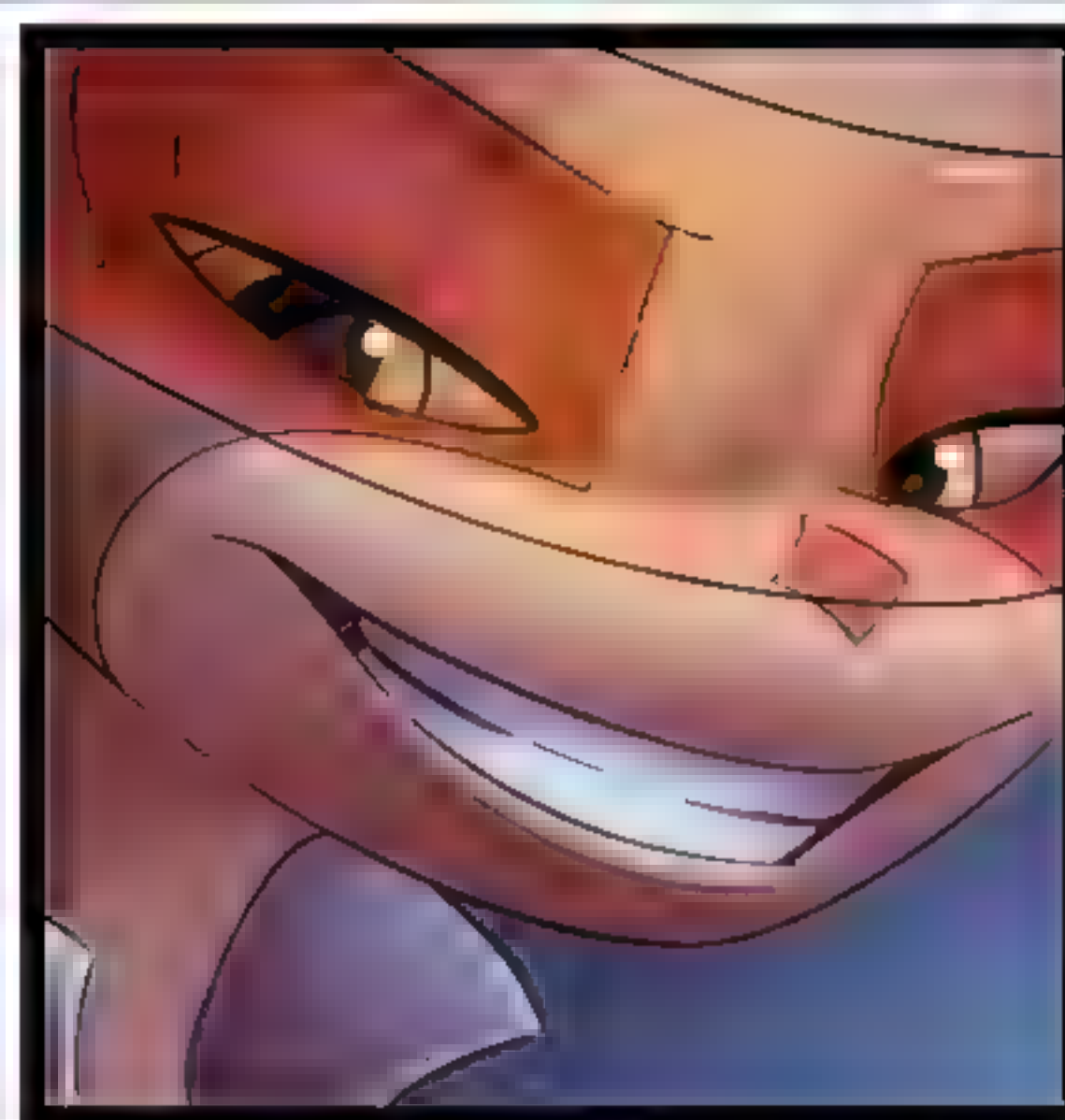


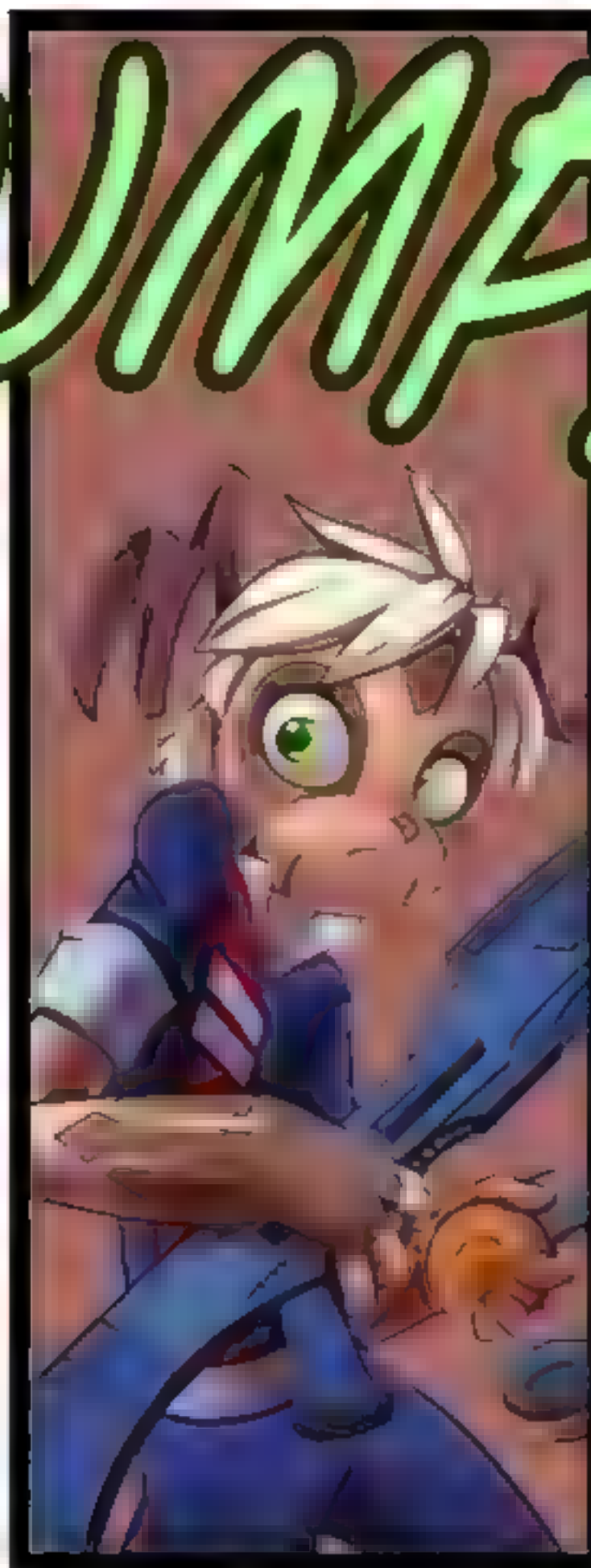
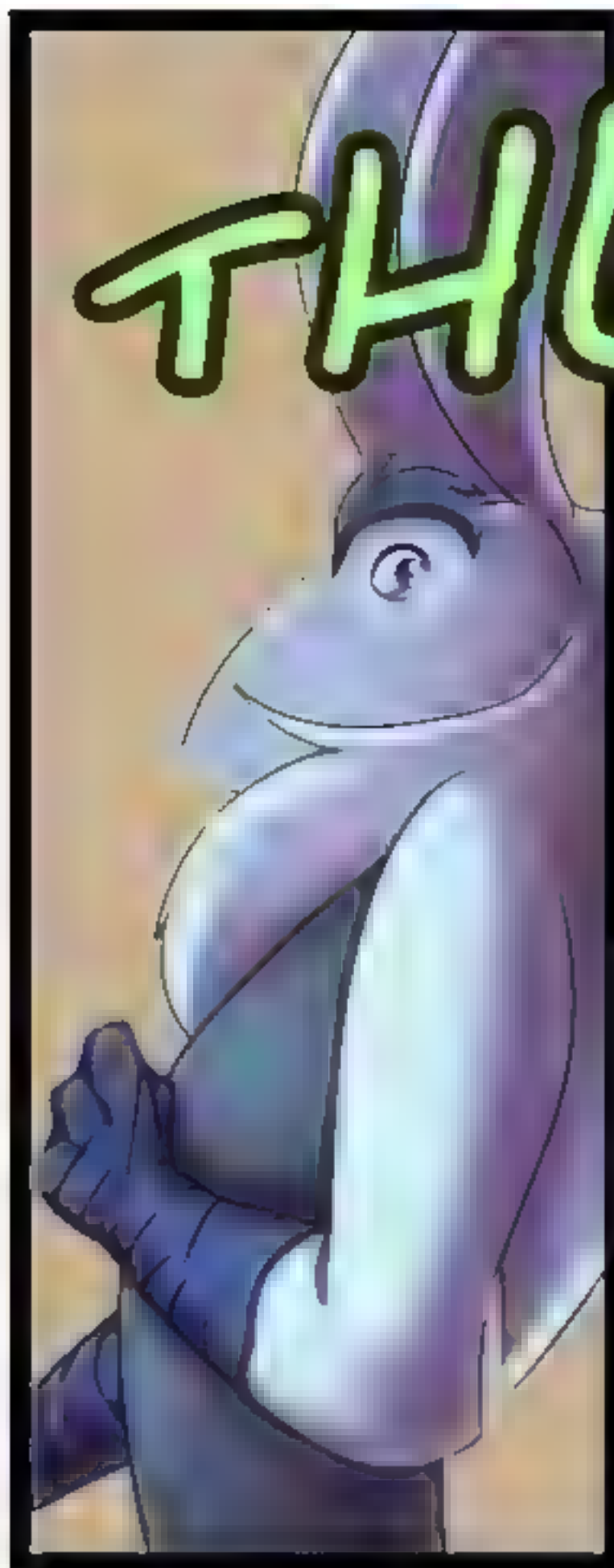
NNNNOT
REALLY,
NO.













IS THAT THE PENCIL
PUSHER?

THE ONE WHO
COULD SHUT US
ALL DOWN, YES.



AFTERNOON,
PATRON. CAN I
HELP YOU?

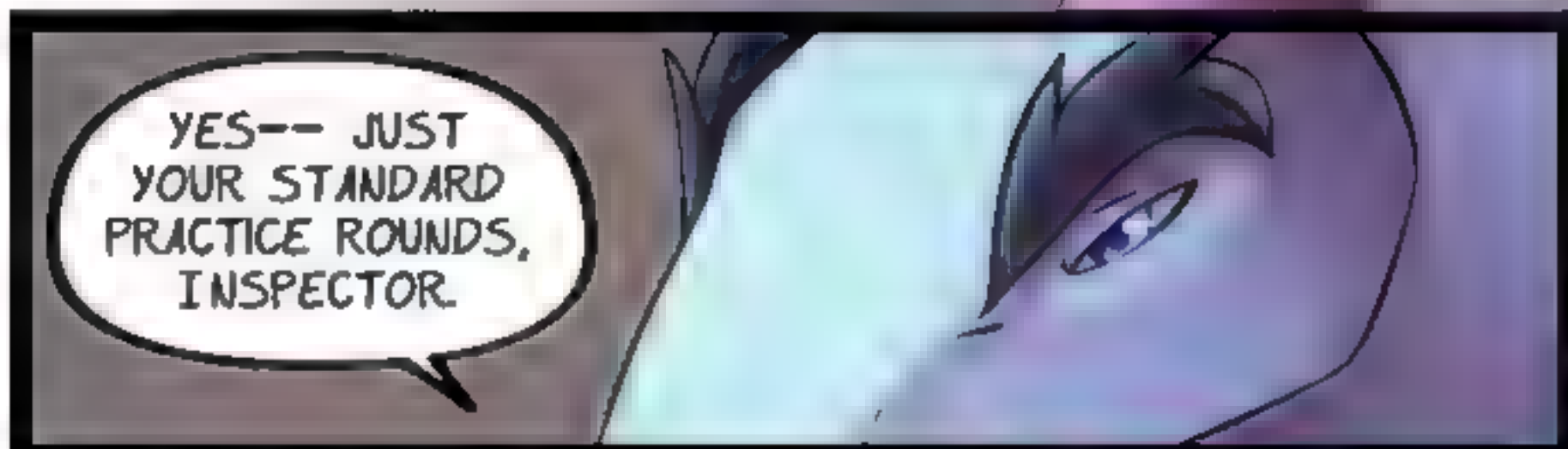
CLE-BEEP



I BELIEVE
SO, HOST.

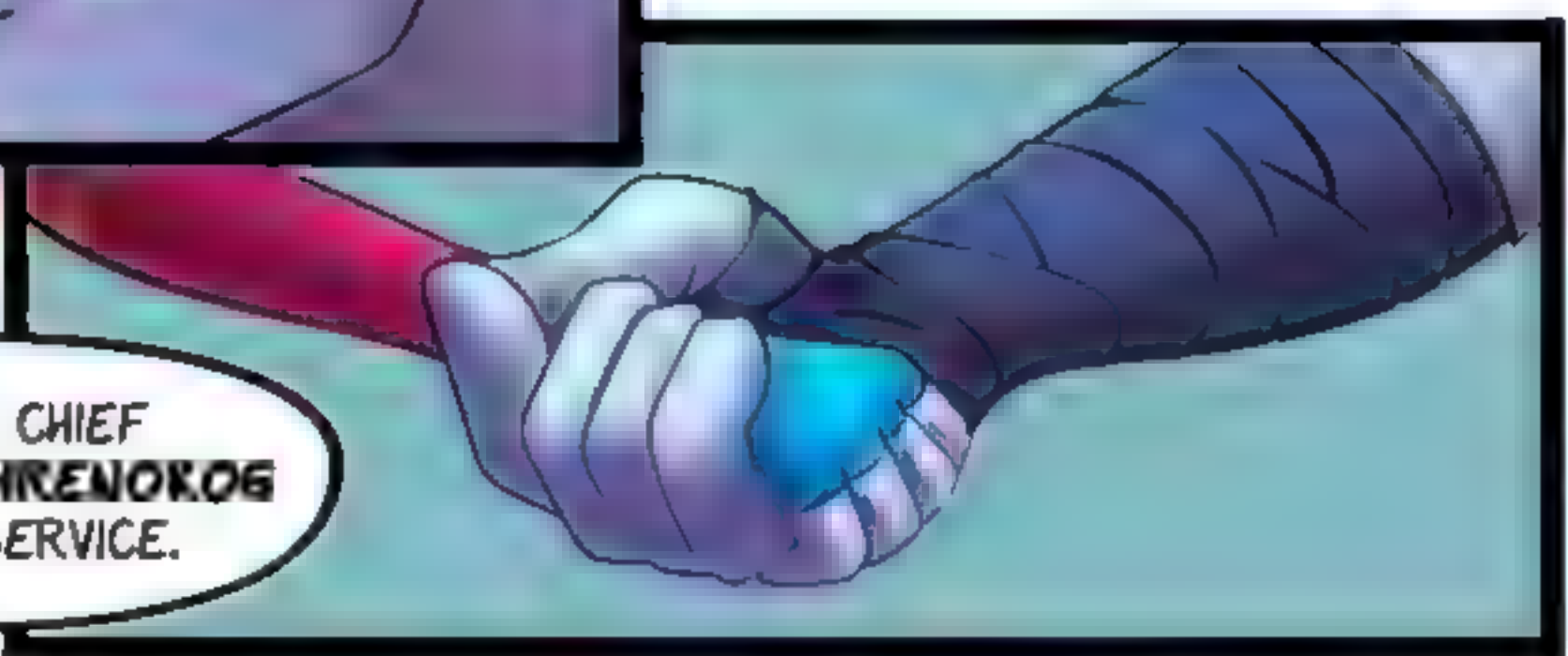
INSPECTOR
LOKSAN BILISHT,
KASTINA BOARD
OF EDUCATIONAL
COMPLIANCE.

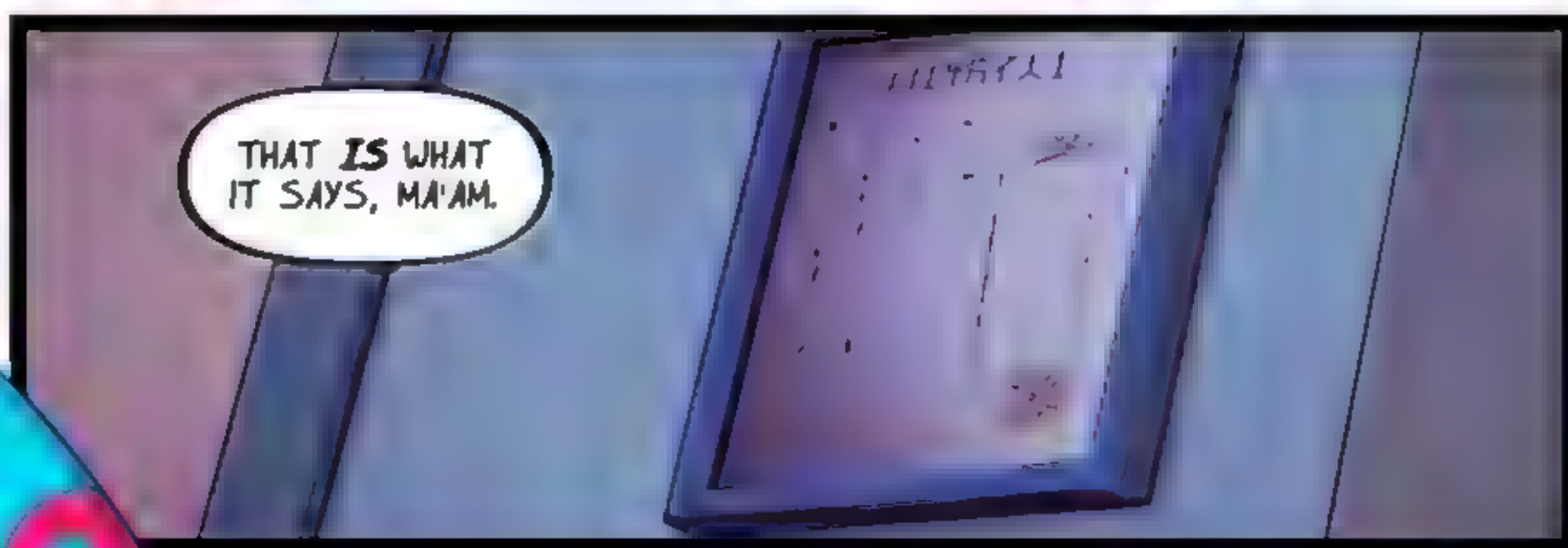
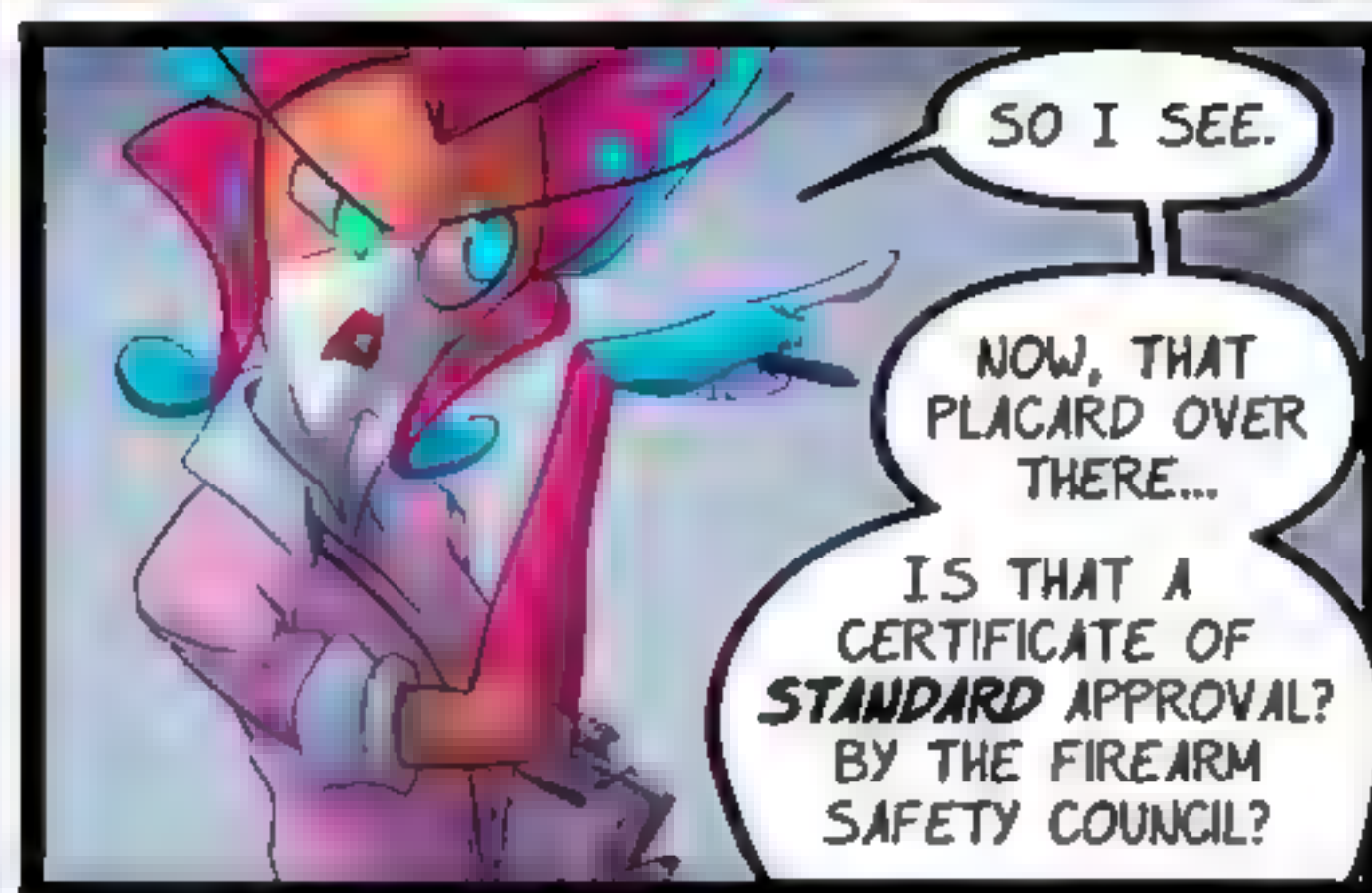
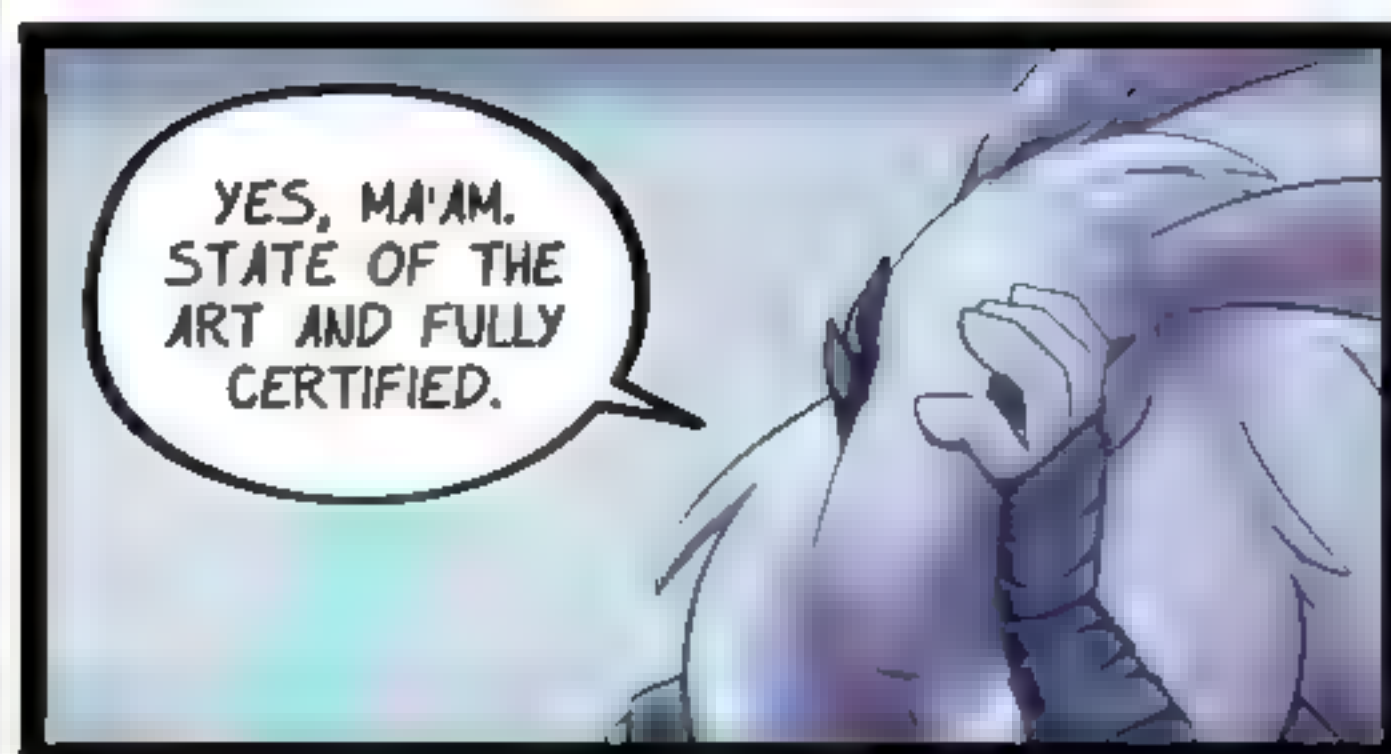
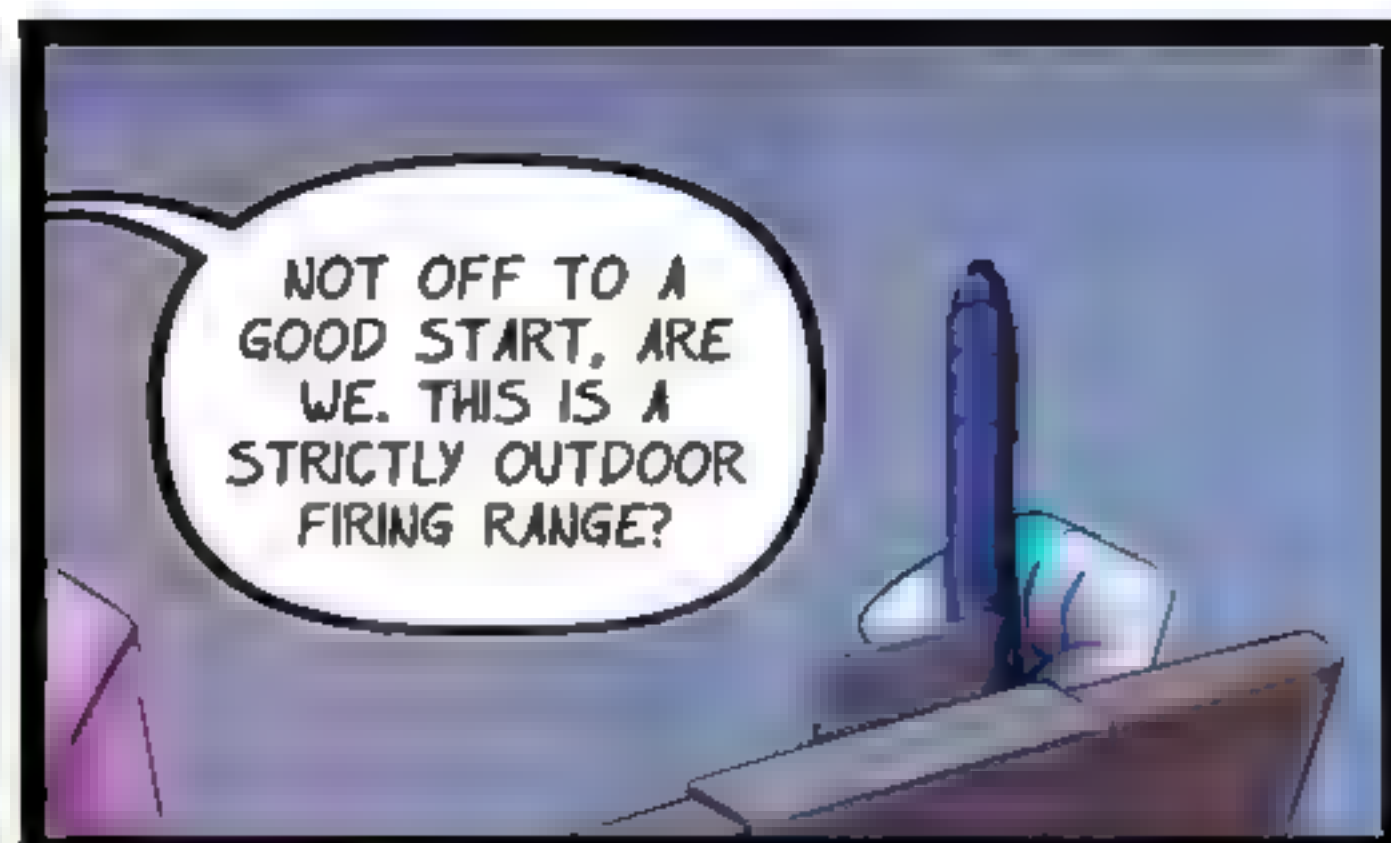
I HEARD
GUNSHOTS.

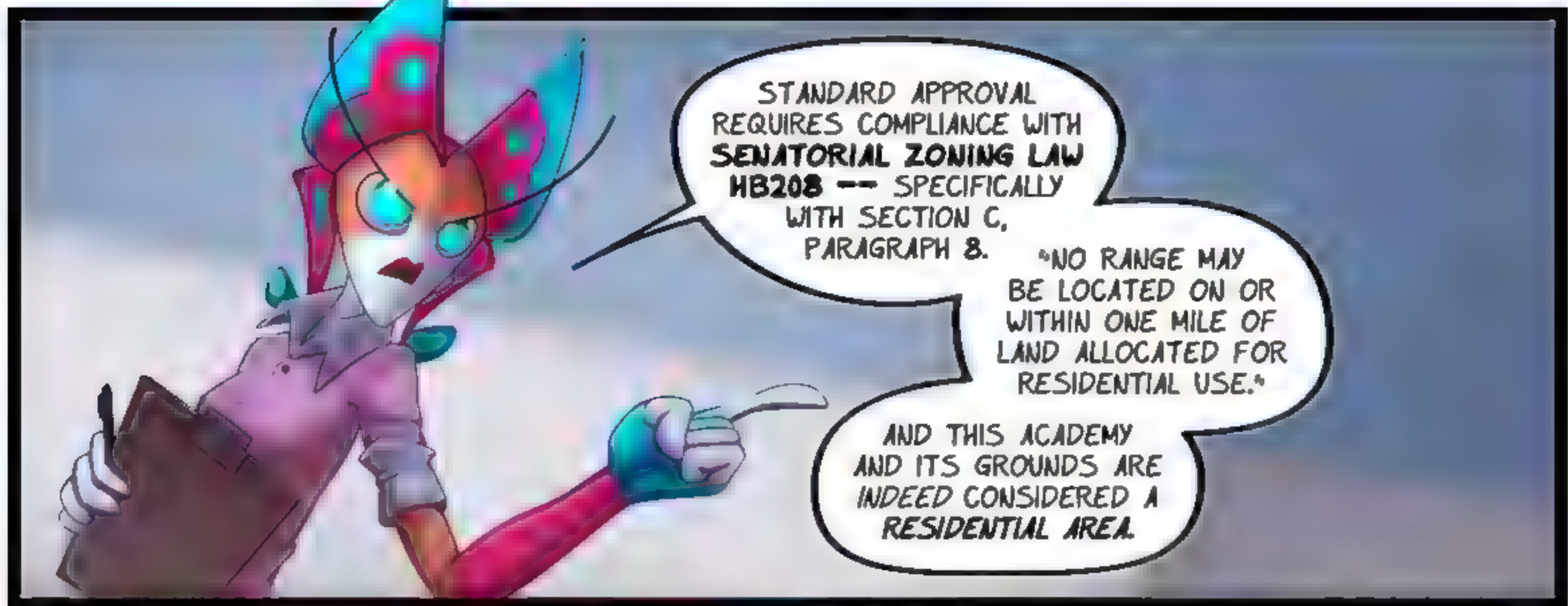


YES-- JUST
YOUR STANDARD
PRACTICE ROUNDS,
INSPECTOR.

SECURITY CHIEF
RAGTAMET ZHRENOKOG
AT YOUR SERVICE.







STANDARD APPROVAL
REQUIRES COMPLIANCE WITH
**SENATORIAL ZONING LAW
HB208** -- SPECIFICALLY
WITH SECTION C,
PARAGRAPH 8.

*NO RANGE MAY
BE LOCATED ON OR
WITHIN ONE MILE OF
LAND ALLOCATED FOR
RESIDENTIAL USE.*

AND THIS ACADEMY
AND ITS GROUNDS ARE
INDEED CONSIDERED A
RESIDENTIAL AREA.



CORRECT. WHICH IS
WHY WE WERE GRANTED A
SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS PERMIT
FROM THE COUNCIL.

I'LL NEED
TO VERIFY IT.



OF COURSE.

LIEUTENANT,
WOULD YOU PULL
UP THE DOCS FOR
INSPEDCTOR
BILISHT?



SURE THING,
CHIEF.



KHENO NERRE GOMA
TZEHUKHUNET, UN.

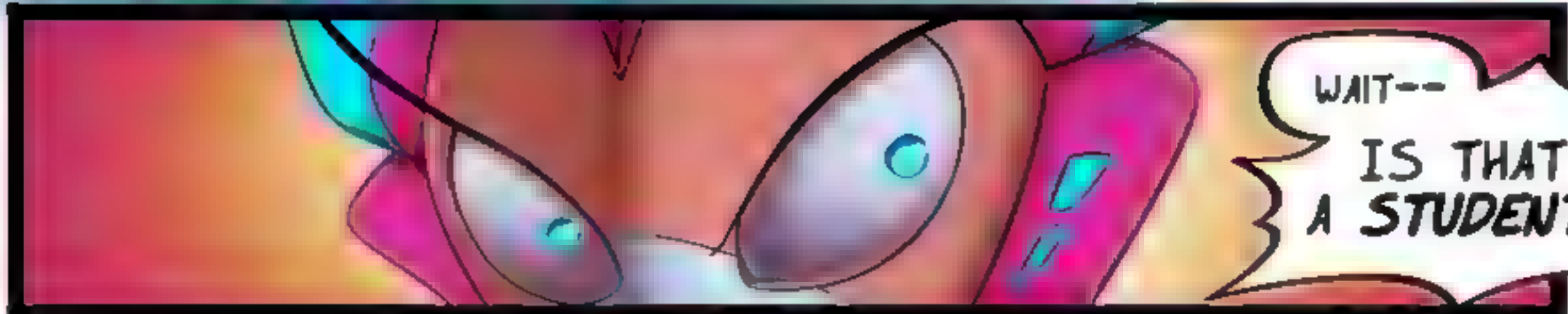
THAT BUG'S GONNA
BE A PROBLEM,
ISN'T SHE.

UN DEZEGA.
ORGQUE OZNUZ
AGNATET ZHOZU
DO-KHENTET.

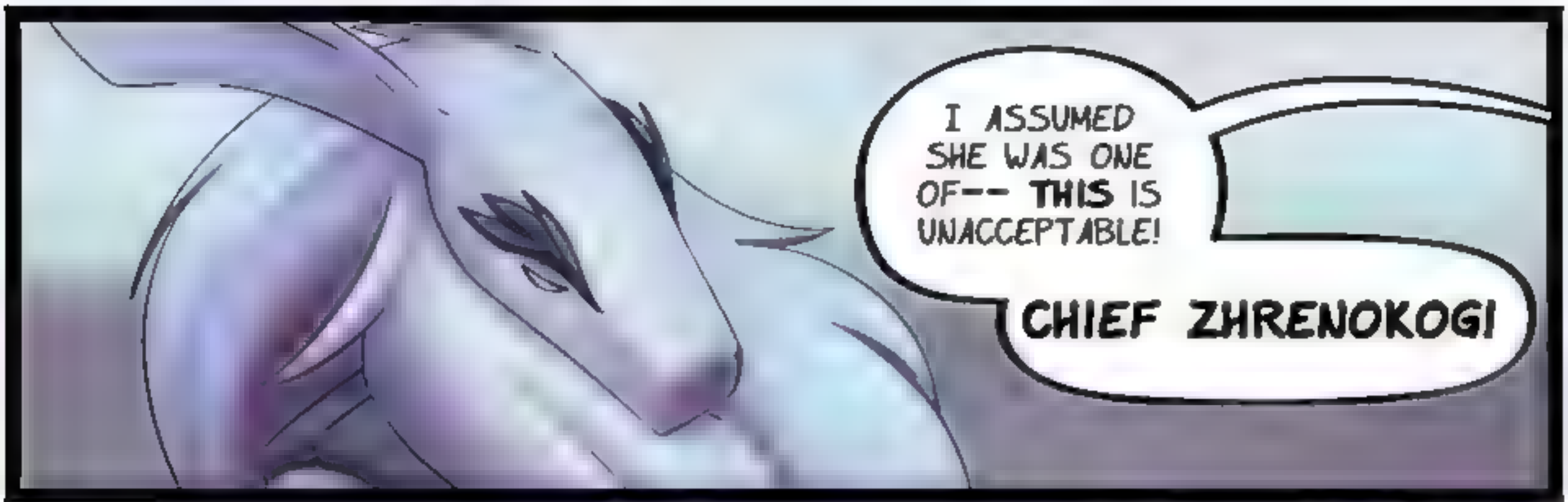
NO, SHE ISN'T.
WE'VE GOT OUR
BASES COVERED.

EUN TEPZO-ZOA
AX UTAGANUZ AX UTAGA
TEPNUZ. ZHET.

AND DON'T TALK
ABOUT PEOPLE IN
OTHER LANGUAGES.
IT'S RUDE.



WAIT--
IS THAT
A STUDENT?!



THE MINIMUM AGE FOR A GUN PERMIT IS *EIGHTEEN*, MY DEARIE.

WELL YEAH, BUT THERE'S EXCEPTIONS! IT'S IN THE FIREARM SAFETY MANDATE.

ARTICLE THREE, SECTION B:

*INDIVIDUALS AGED FIFTEEN AND OLDER MAY SUBMIT TO A BATTERY OF STANDARDIZED EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS OF SUITABILITY,

AND, SHOULD THEY PASS, BE GRANTED A *THREE-YEAR* LICENSE TO CARRY FIREARMS.*

I PASSED *TWO* WRITTEN EXAMS,

ALL THREE PRACTICAL GUN SAFETY TESTS,

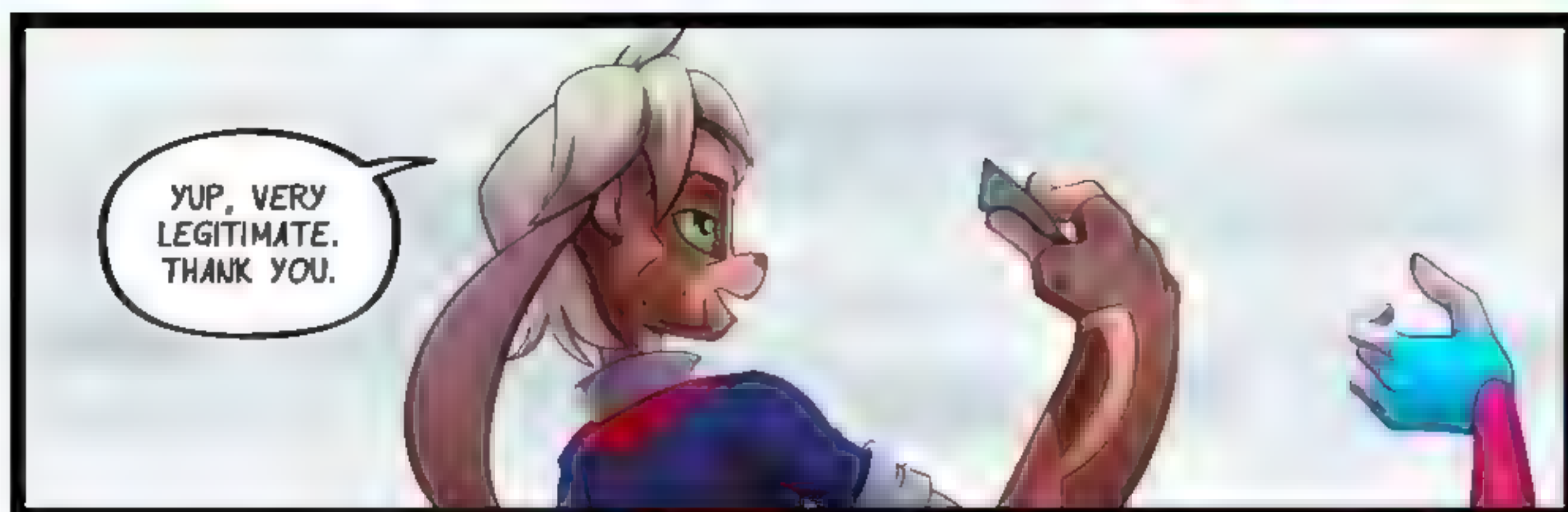
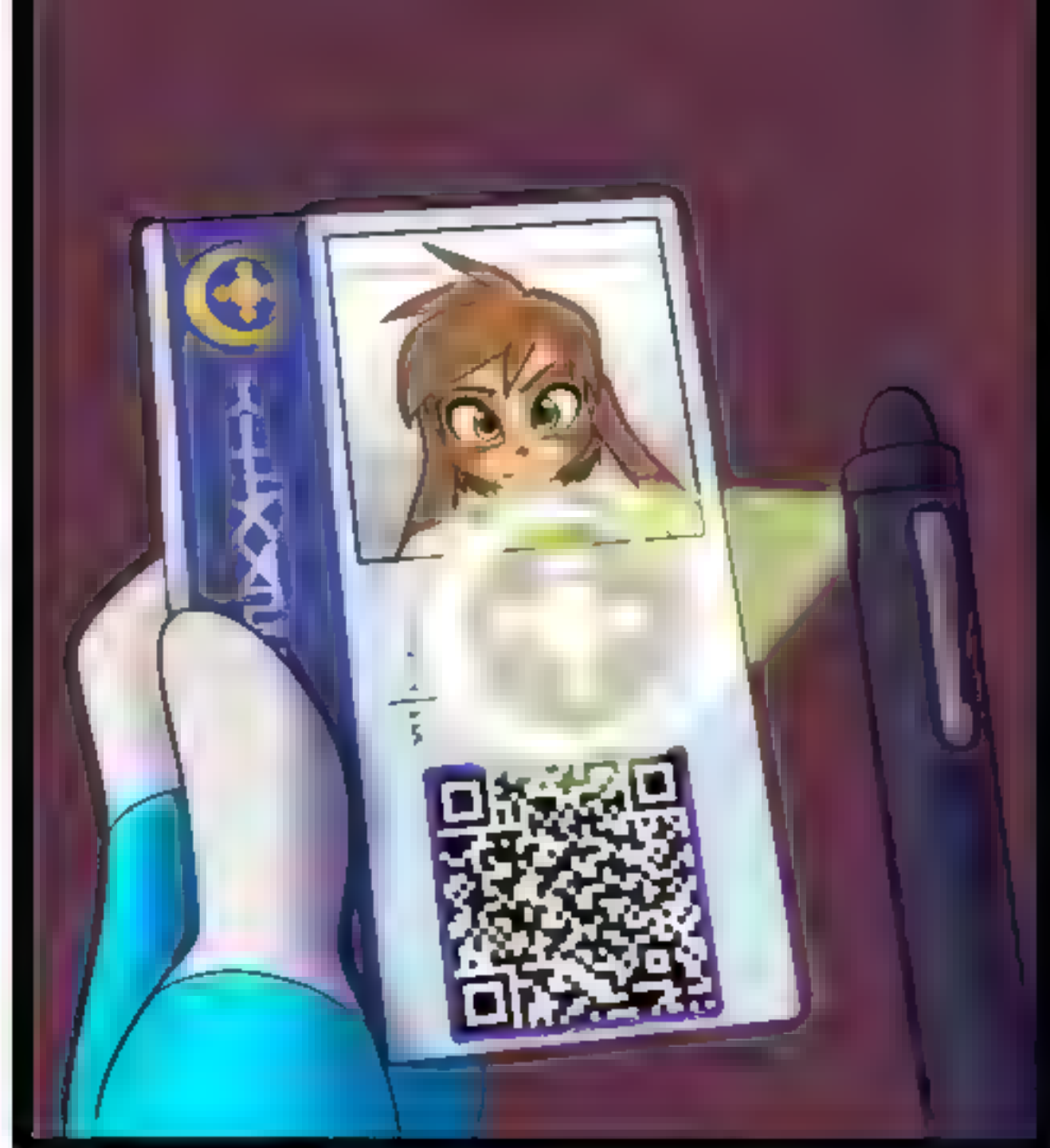
TWO K.B.I.S. BACKGROUND CHECKS,

AND A FULL-ON PHYSICAL AND PSYCH ASSESSMENT.

ALL OF MY SCORES ARE *PERFECT*.

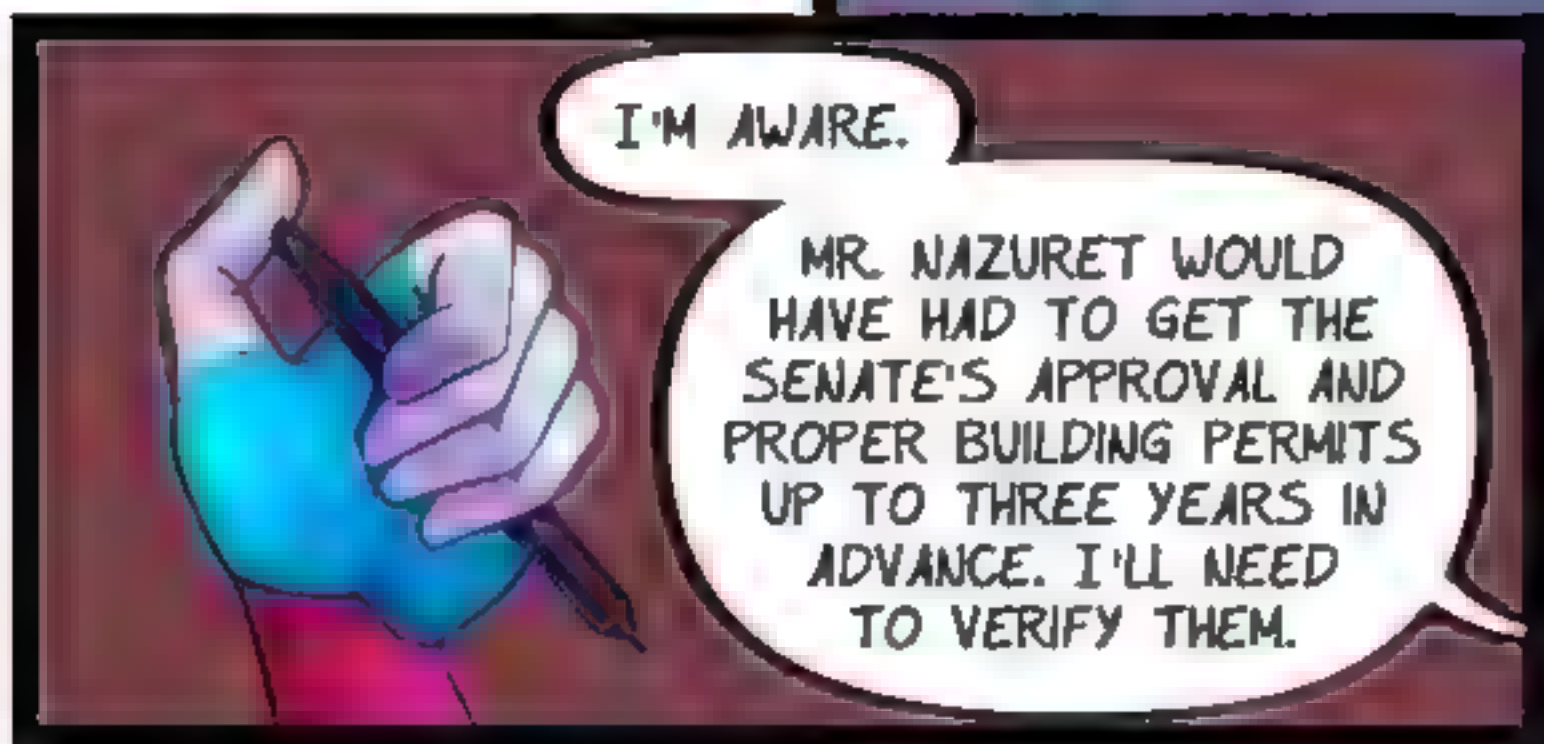
I'VE MEMORIZED THAT WHOLE FREAKING DOCUMENT. I *EARNED* THIS PERMIT, LIKE IT OR NOT!

LET ME SEE THAT.



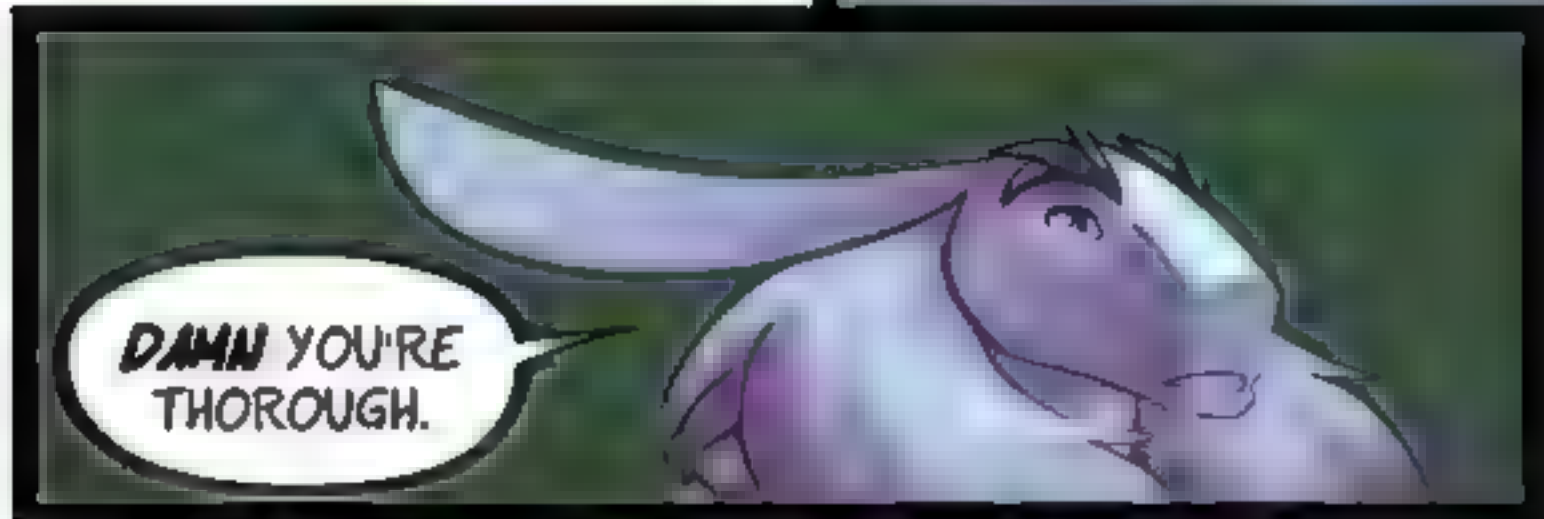


MA'AM, THAT'S...
BEFORE THE SCHOOL
WAS FOUNDED.



I'M AWARE.

MR. NAZURET WOULD
HAVE HAD TO GET THE
SENATE'S APPROVAL AND
PROPER BUILDING PERMITS
UP TO THREE YEARS IN
ADVANCE. I'LL NEED
TO VERIFY THEM.



DAMN YOU'RE
THOROUGH.



I DO
MY JOB.



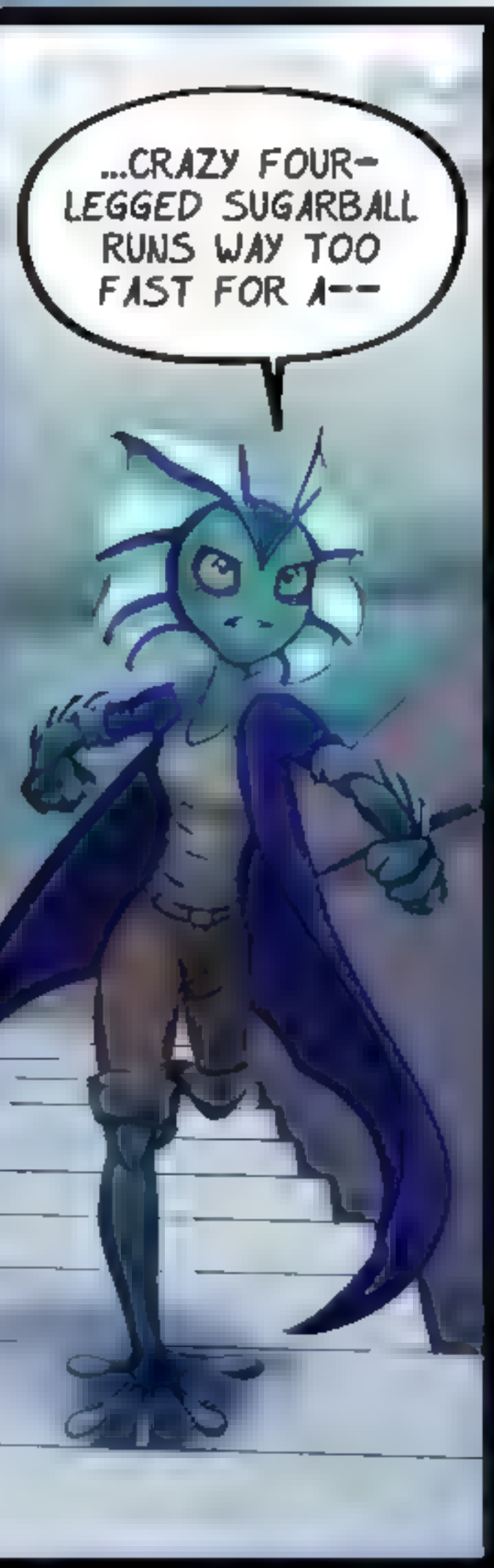
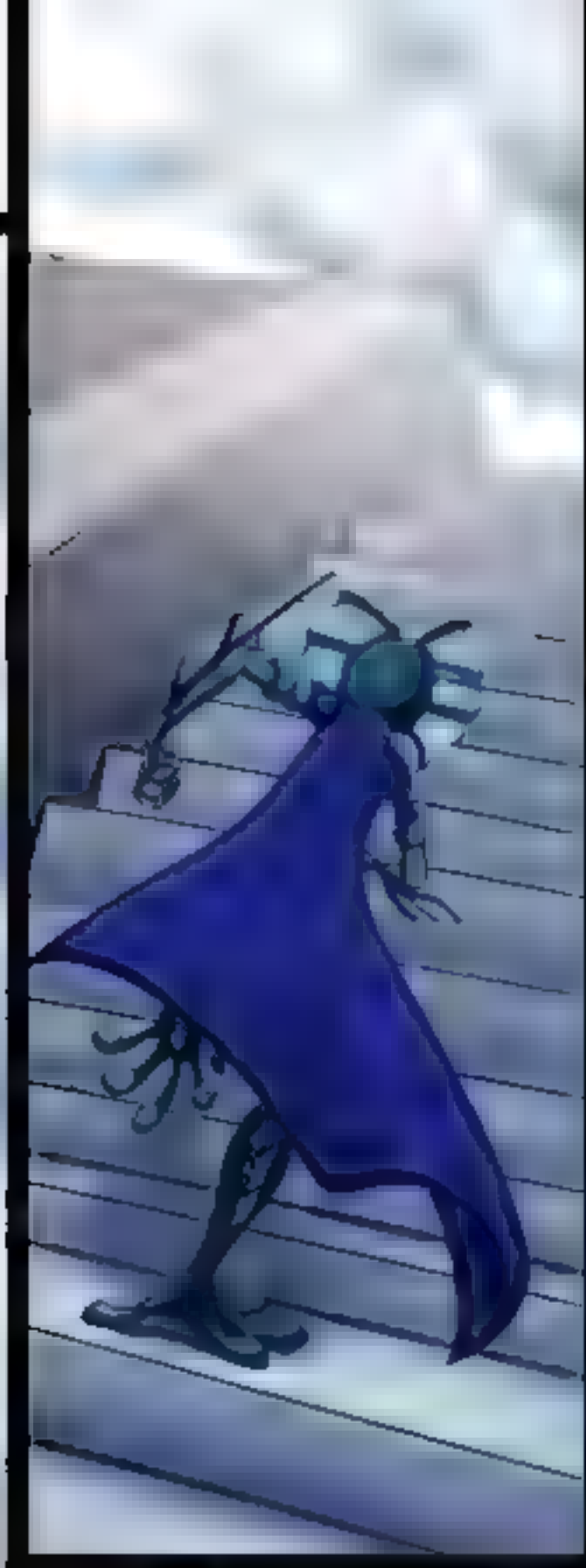
NOW, LET'S
SEE THOSE
PAPERS...

HMPH.

NO WAY YOU'RE
GETTING PAST Z
BUG-FACE.



AND NO WAY
THOSE TRUANTS
ARE GETTING
PAST ME!



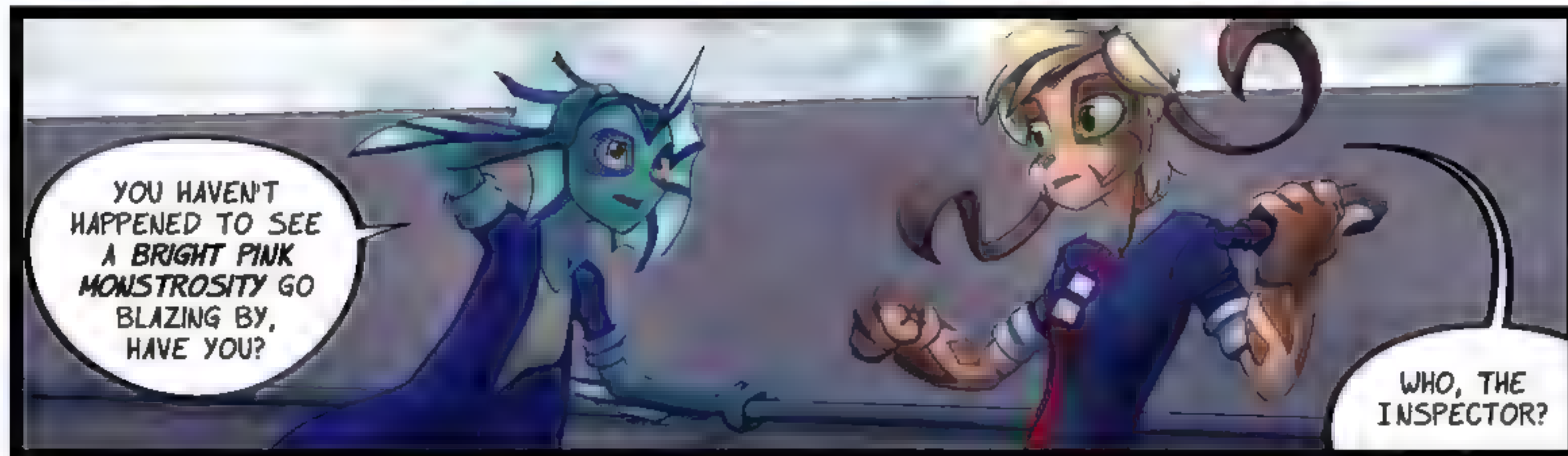
...CRAZY FOUR-
LEGGED SUGARBALL
RUNS WAY TOO
FAST FOR A--



BUDDY!!



AWWWW,
HEY BUDDY.



YOU HAVEN'T
HAPPENED TO SEE
A BRIGHT PINK
MONSTROSITY GO
BLAZING BY,
HAVE YOU?

WHO, THE
INSPECTOR?





OH THANK
GOODNESS.

SO NOBODY
NEEDS MY HELP,
FOR ONCE?



HEH, NOPE! ALREADY
TAKEN CARE OF. THE
EXALTED SPARKLEFACE
JUST GOT SCHOOLED
BY YOURS TRULY.

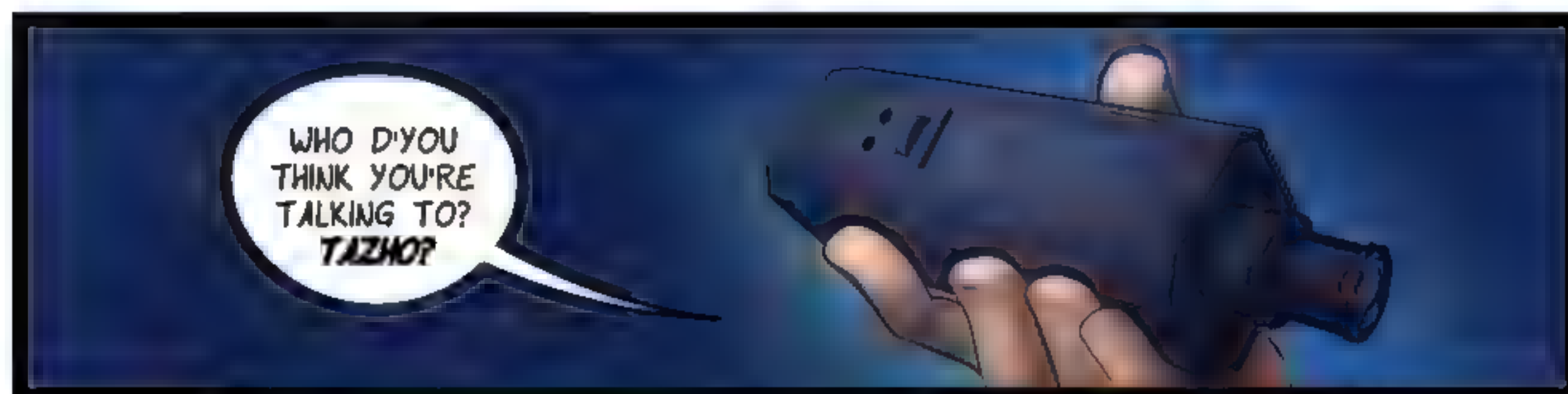


THAT SOUNDS...
EITHER EXTREMELY
GRATIFYING, OR
DISASTROUS.

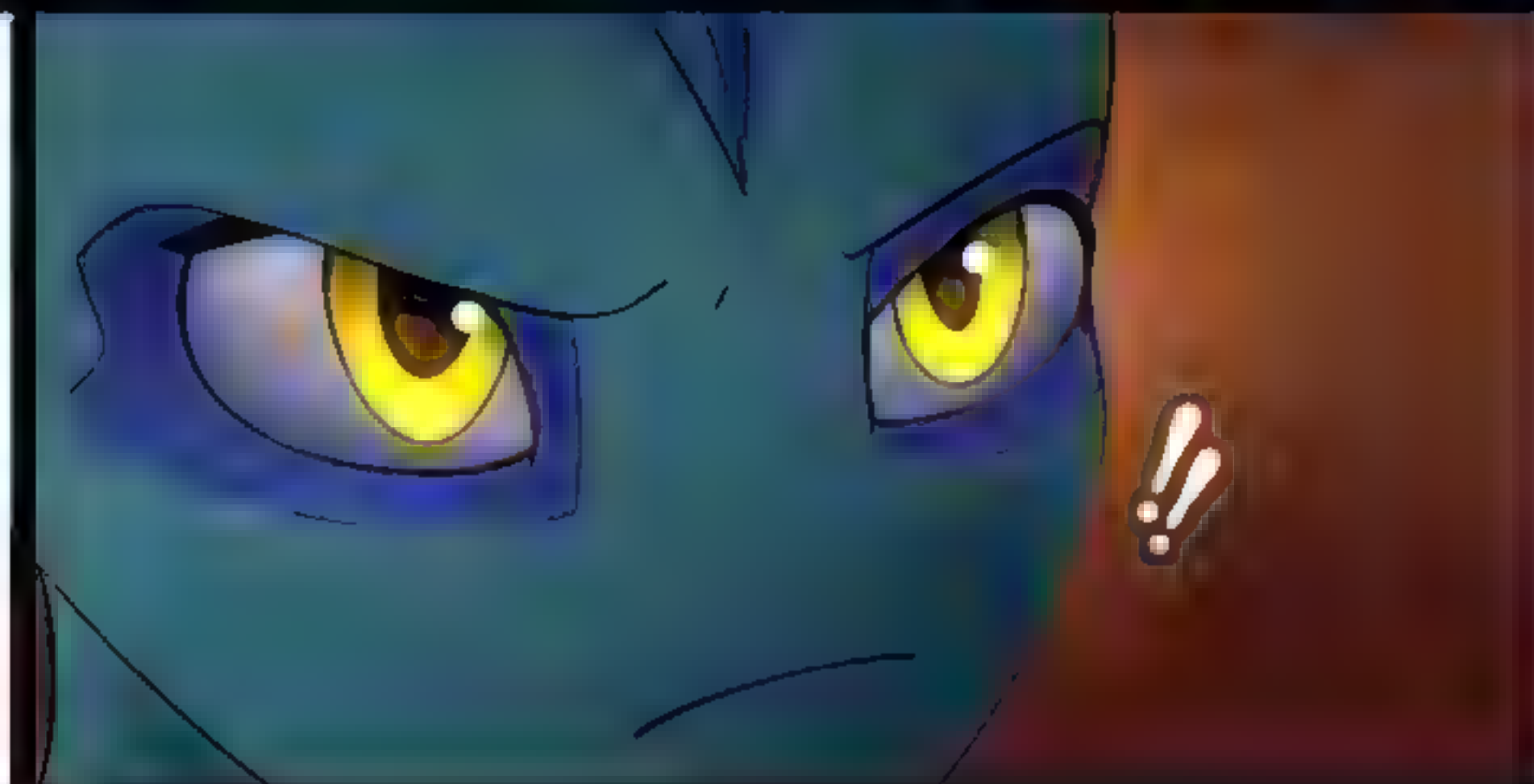
PLEASE TELL
ME YOU KEPT IT
PROFESSIONAL.



OF COURSE I
DID! SHE SPOUTED
LEGAL JARGON, I
SPOUTED IT BACK.



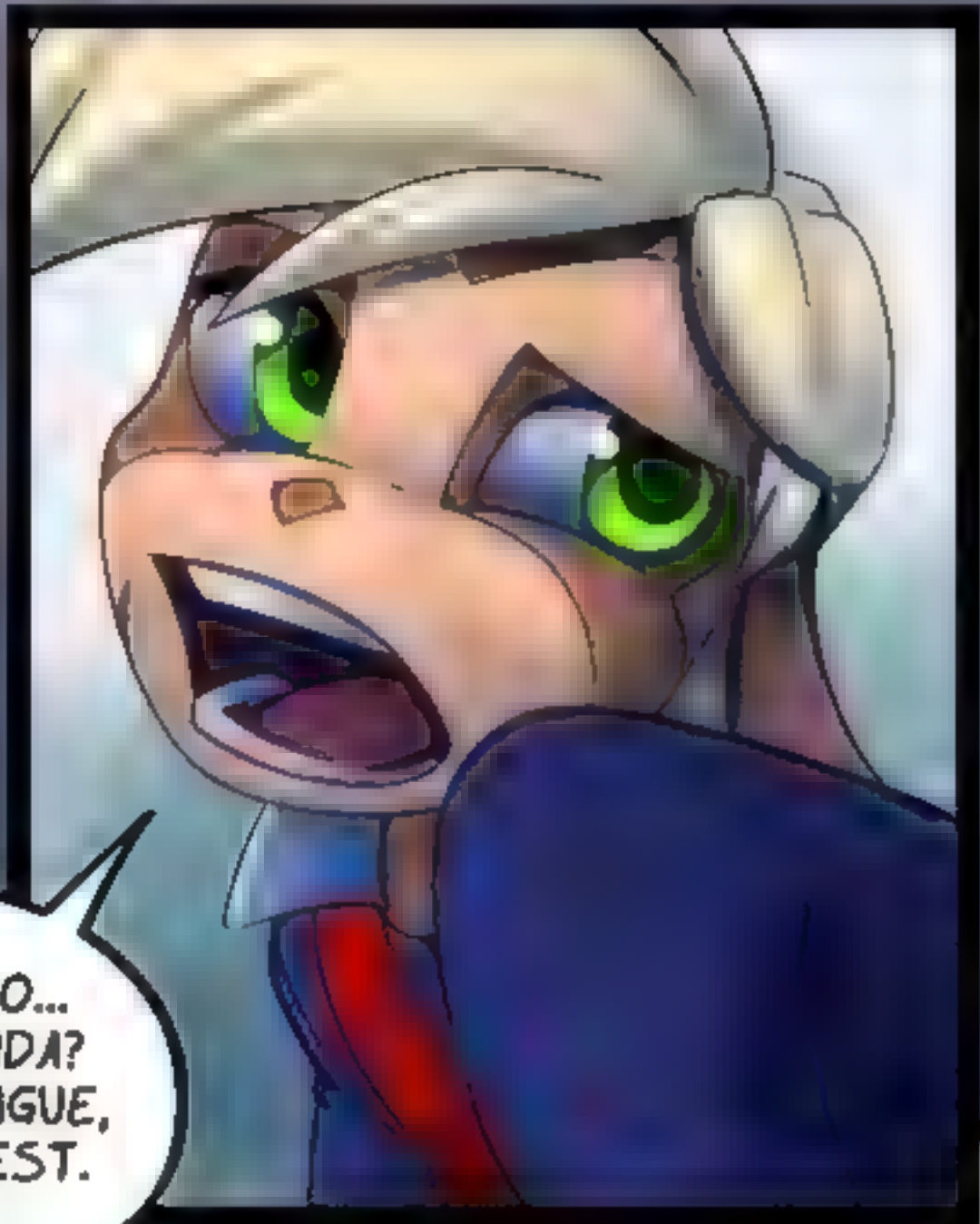
WHO D'YOU
THINK YOU'RE
TALKING TO?
TAZHOP?



KHEIL... WHY DO YOU HAVE THAT SCOPE.

WHAT, THIS THING? IT'S MY PRIZE FOR OUT-SHOOTING THE CHIEF THROUGH TOTALLY LEGIT MEANS!

TELL ME YOU DIDN'T STEAL IT.



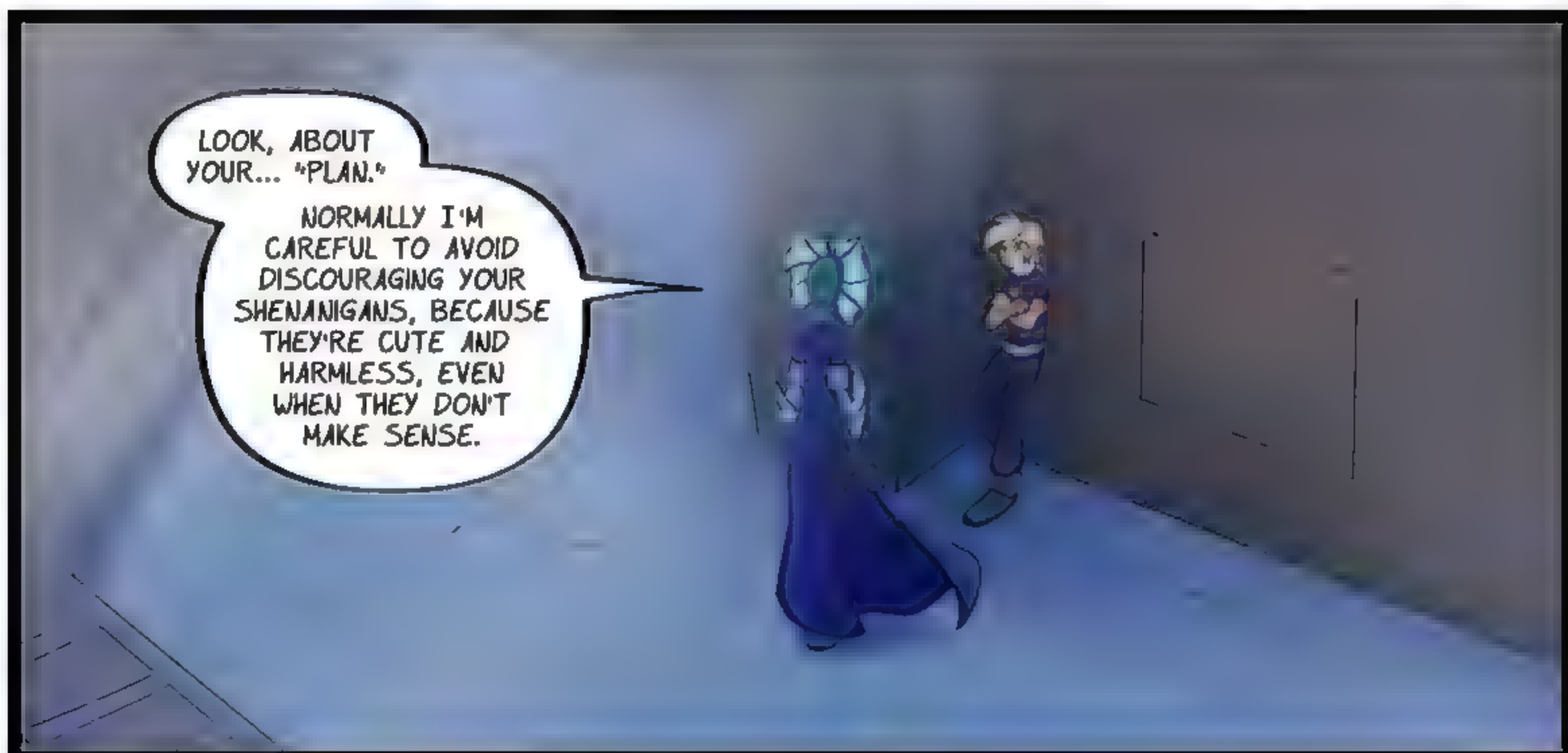
WHAT? NOOO... I MEAN, KINDA? IT'S A LIL' VAGUE, TO BE HONEST.



SURE IT IS.

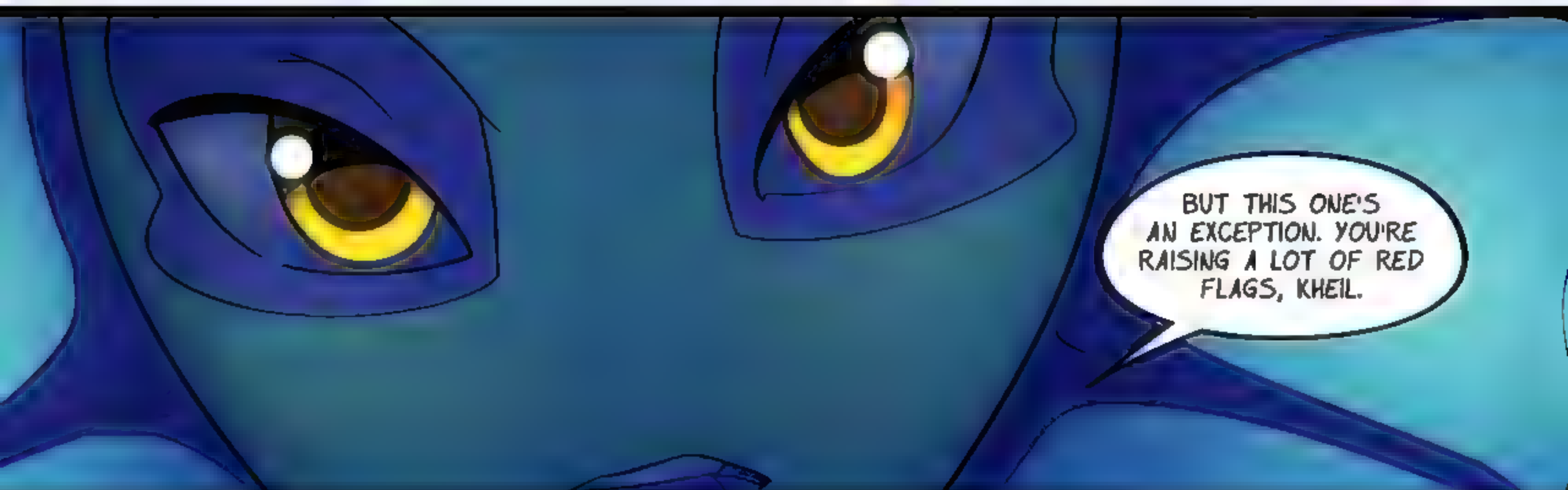


COME HERE, WE'VE GOT TO TALK.



LOOK, ABOUT
YOUR... "PLAN."

NORMALLY I'M
CAREFUL TO AVOID
DISCOURAGING YOUR
SHENANIGANS, BECAUSE
THEY'RE CUTE AND
HARMLESS, EVEN
WHEN THEY DON'T
MAKE SENSE.



BUT THIS ONE'S
AN EXCEPTION. YOU'RE
RAISING A LOT OF RED
FLAGS, KHEIL.



WAIT, WHAT?
OH COME ON, I--



A COUPLE OF
HOURS AGO, YOU
**TOOK MY PHONE OUT
OF OZ'S HANDS** AND
GAVE YOURSELF ACCESS
TO THINGS YOU DON'T
HAVE PERMISSION
TO LOOK AT.



SURE, BUT
I SCRUBBED THE
RECORD LIKE YOU
TAUGHT M--



AND YOU DID THIS
DURING THE MORNING
CLASS BLOCK.

RIGHT WHEN THERE'S
A GOOD CHANCE THAT
SOMEONE WAS LOOKING
AT THOSE RECORDS
IN **REAL TIME**.

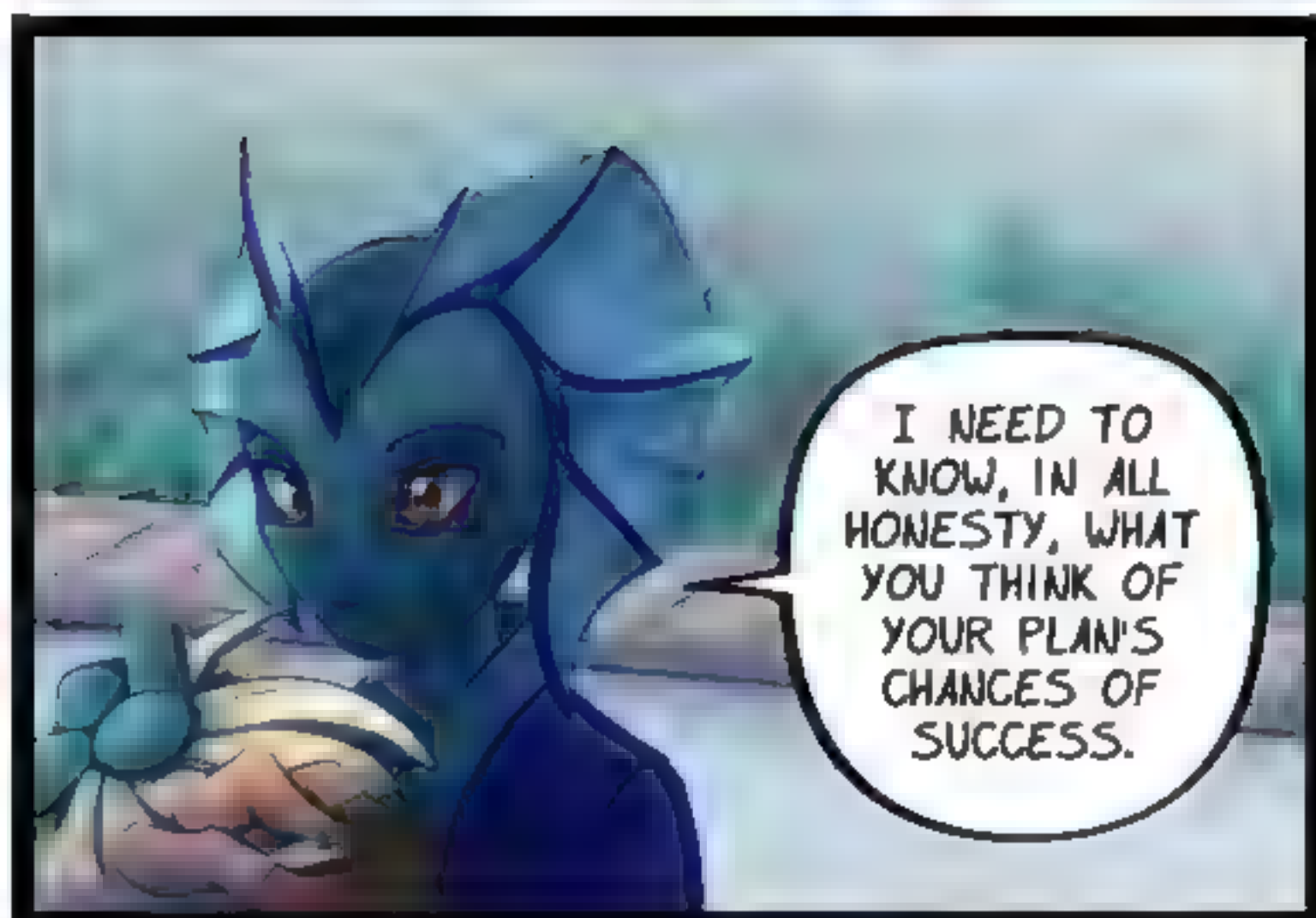
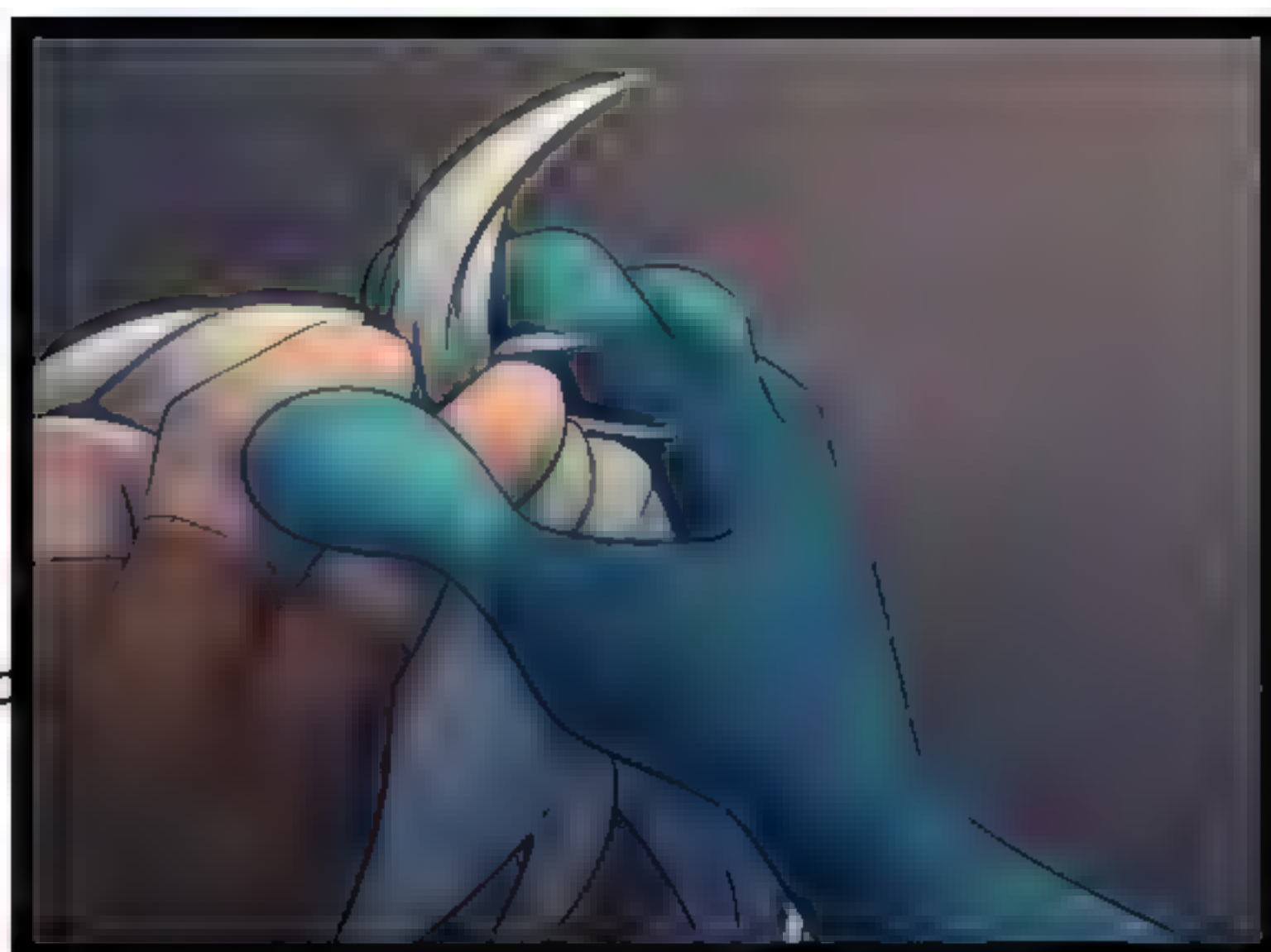


...OH.
OH CRAP.



"OH CRAP" ISN'T
THE HALF OF IT.
SECURITY BREACHES
LIKE THAT GET
PEOPLE FIRED.
AT MINIMUM

YOU COULD
HAVE GOTTEN ME
DEMOTED, MAYBE
EVEN EXPELLED!





FINE, YOU
WANT THE TRUTH?
NOTHING I DO IS
GONNA WORK.

THERE'S NO
REASON WHY I
SHOULDN'T HAVE
GRADUATED BY NOW.
DAD HAS NO REASON
TO KEEP HOLDING
ME BACK.

"READ THE
CONTEXT OF THE
SITUATION," YEAH
YEAH, I GOT THAT
YEARS AGO! IT'S
NOT A COMPLICATED
CONCEPT, Y'KNOW?
I JUST DON'T
SEE WHY--

I'M DOING
EVERYTHING RIGHT,
EVERYONE SAYS SO, BUT
IT'S NEVER **ENOUGH**

SOMEWHERE, THERE'S
A BAR I'M SUPPOSED
TO REACH, AND I CAN'T
JUMP HIGH ENOUGH TO TOUCH
IT -- AND EVEN IF I COULD,
I CAN'T **SEE** IT. AND UNTIL
I SOMEHOW GET THERE, I'M
STUCK BEING **PUBLICLY**
HUMILIATED ONCE A YEAR
NO MATTER **WHAT** I DO,
OR HOW WELL I DO IT!

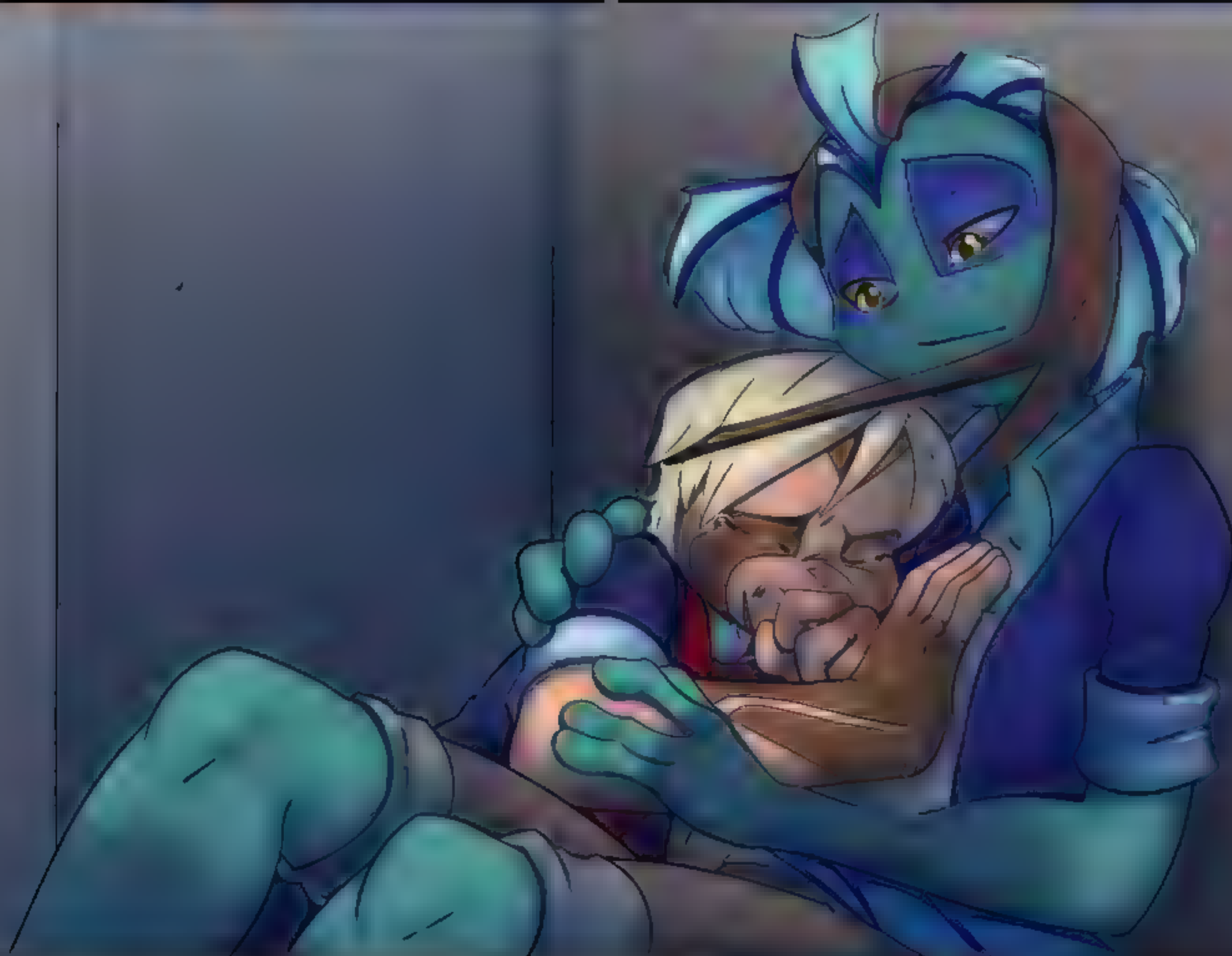
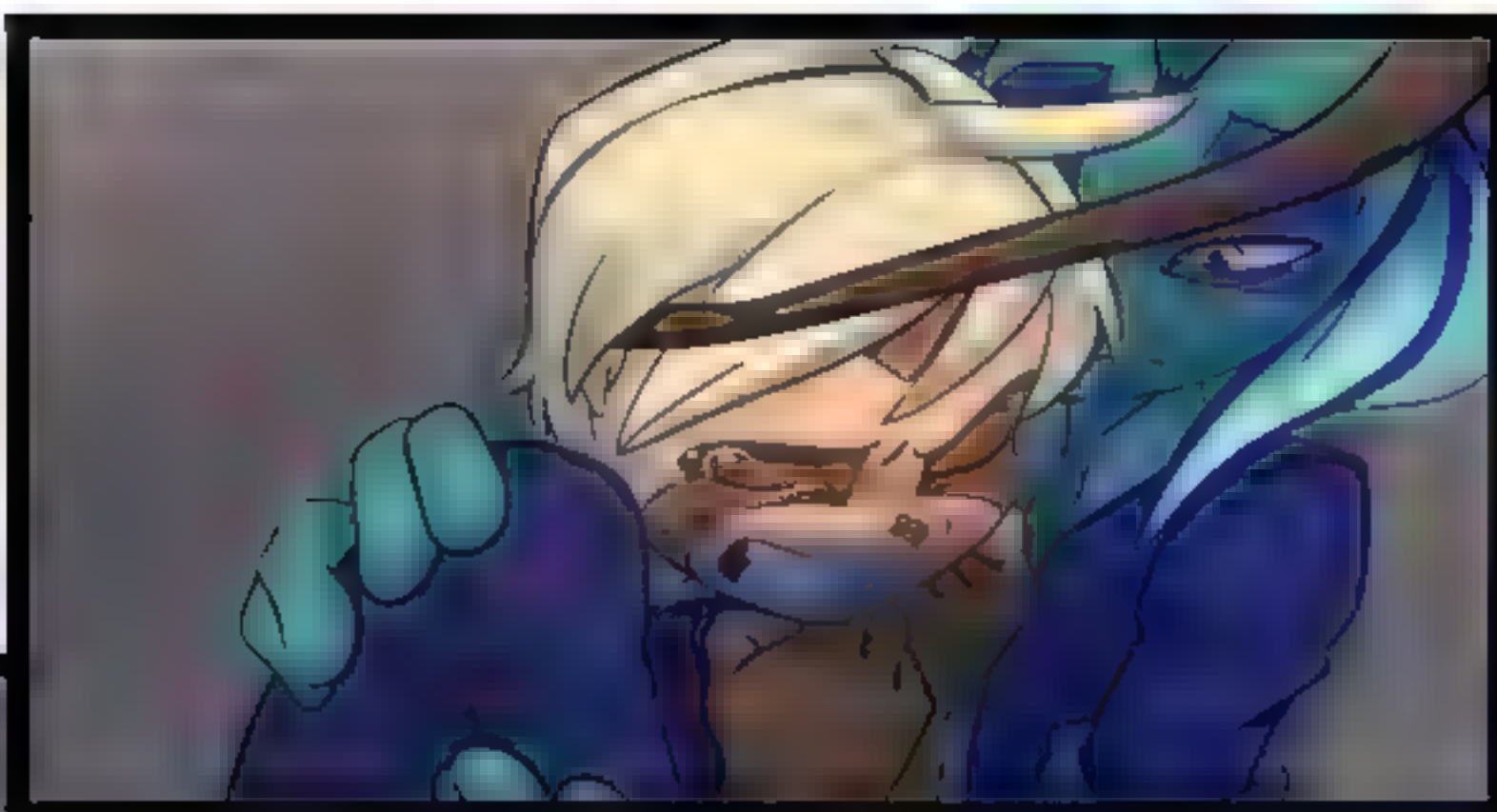
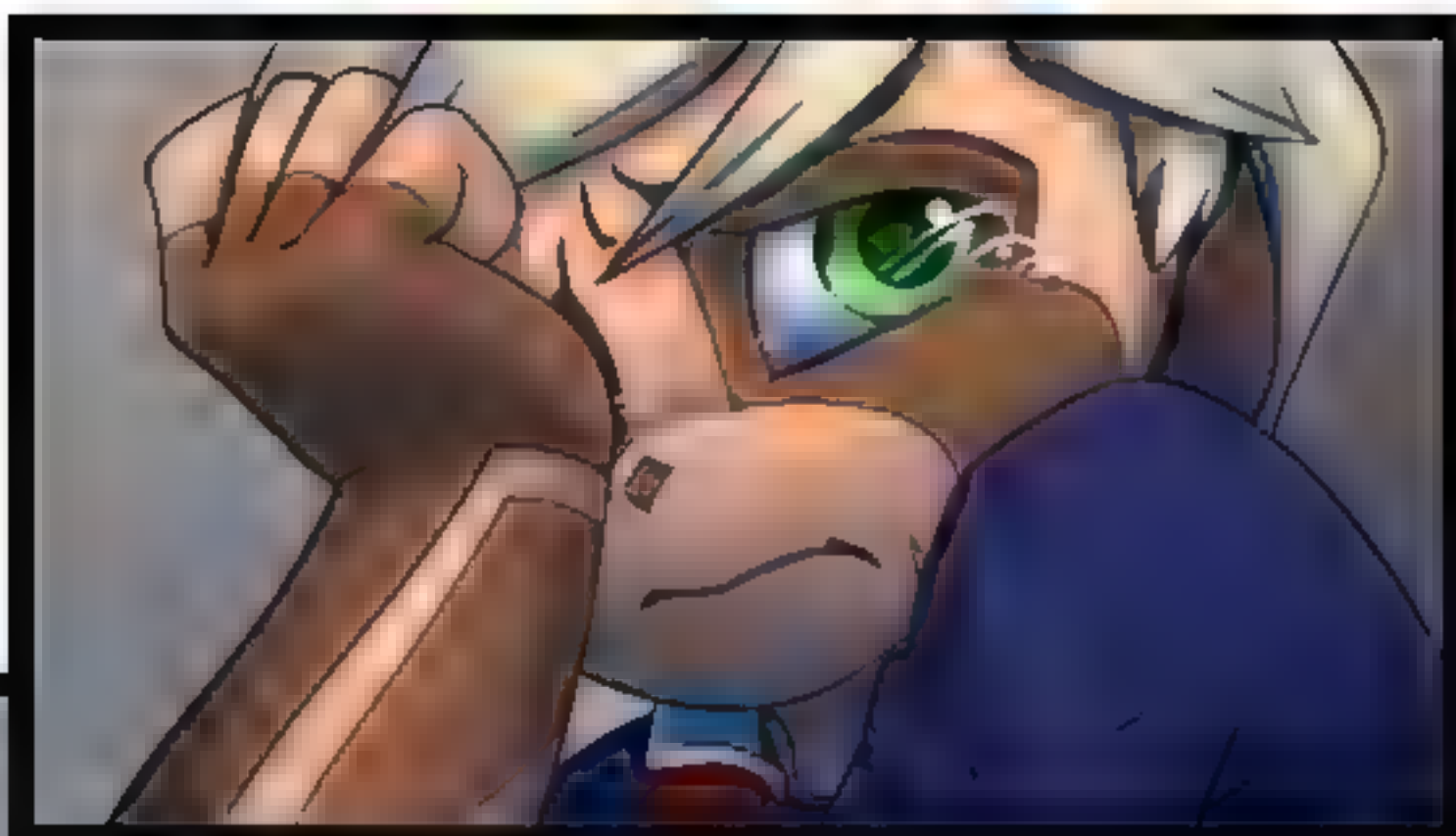
SO YEAH, I'M
GONNA GO WITH ANY
STUPID IDEA THAT MIGHT
GET ME PAST THIS BLOCK.
IF I JUST SIT HERE AND
DO **NOTHING**, THEN I'M
BASICALLY JUST A BIG
WASTE OF AIR--

I GOTTA
MAKE THIS WORK,
AL, THIS IS MY
WHOLE **LIFE!**

...BUT I
NEVER M-MEANT
TO-- TO HURT
ANYBODY...!

HEY.

COME HERE.



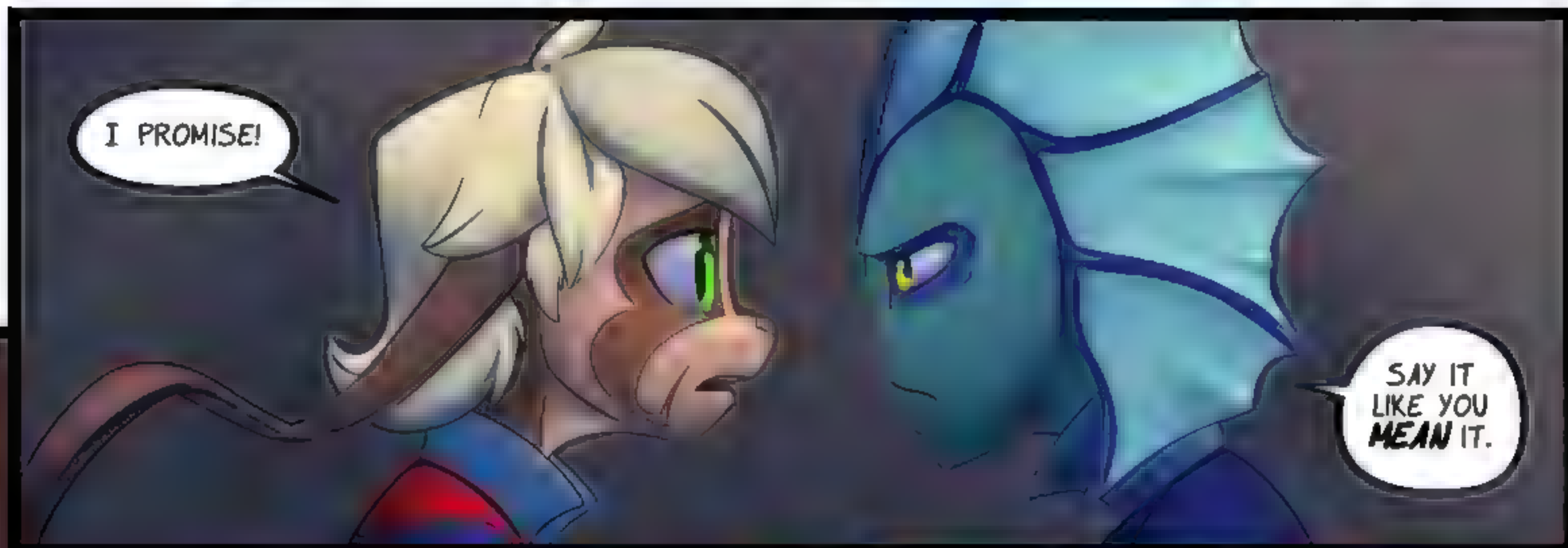


YOU'VE GOT TO PROMISE ME SOMETHING.

SNIFF
...OKAY.

PROMISE YOU'LL STOP AND **THINK** BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ABOUT THESE STUDENTS SKIPPING OUT ON THEIR CLASSES.

MAKE SURE **EVERYTHING** YOU DO IS HARMLESS. AND THAT IT WON'T GET OTHERS IN TROUBLE, EITHER.



I PROMISE!

SAY IT LIKE YOU **MEAN** IT.



I, UM--
I **SUPER MEGA TRIPLE** PROMISE?



NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

SWEAR IT ON YOUR **TITLE**.

I SWEAR, ON MY
HONOR AS **SUPREME**
GRAND MASTER CHAMPION
OF "LEGENDARY WARRIOR
VIII," THAT NONE OF
MY HALF-BAKED IDEAS
WILL HARM--

--OR CAUSE
HARM TO BE
DONE--

--TO MYSELF
OR ANY INNOCENT
BYSTANDERS!

OR TRUANTS.

...DANGIT.

OR TRUANTS.

SO MOTE
IT BE.

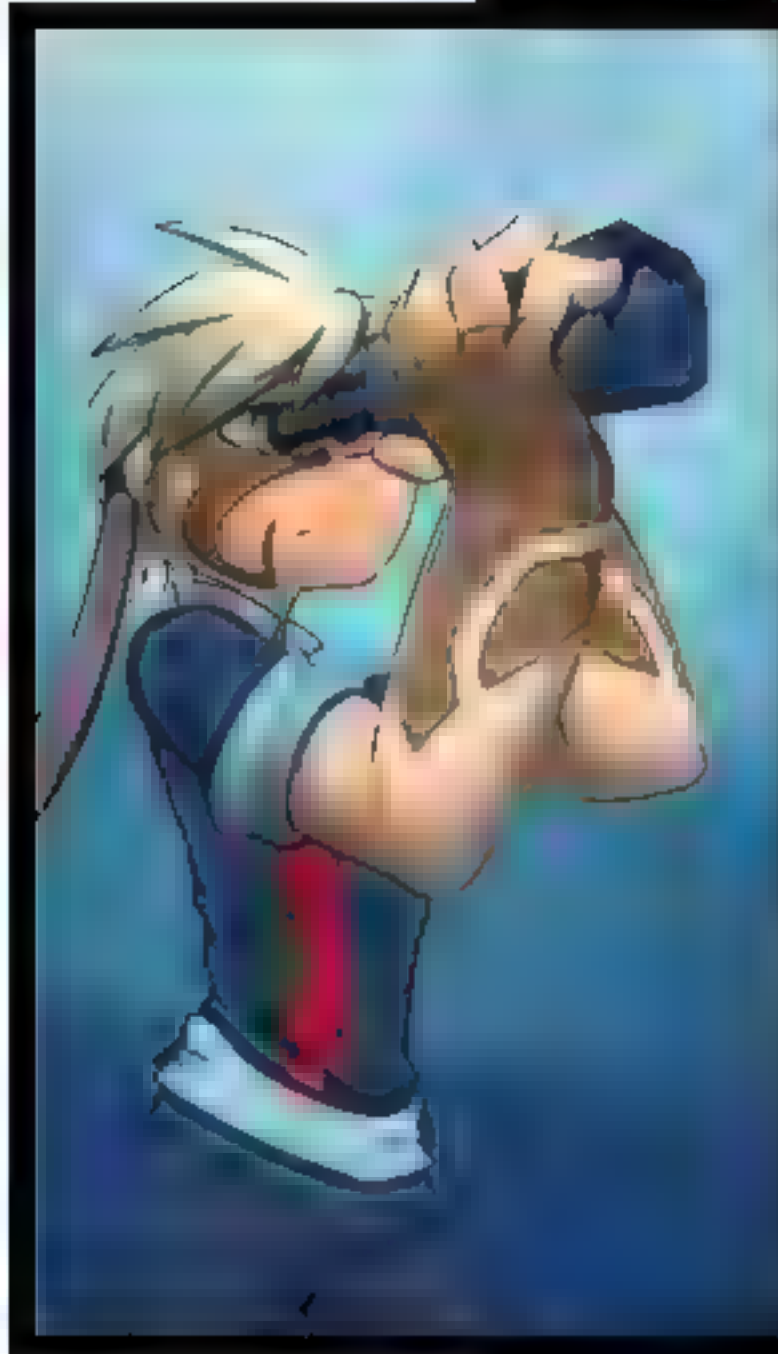
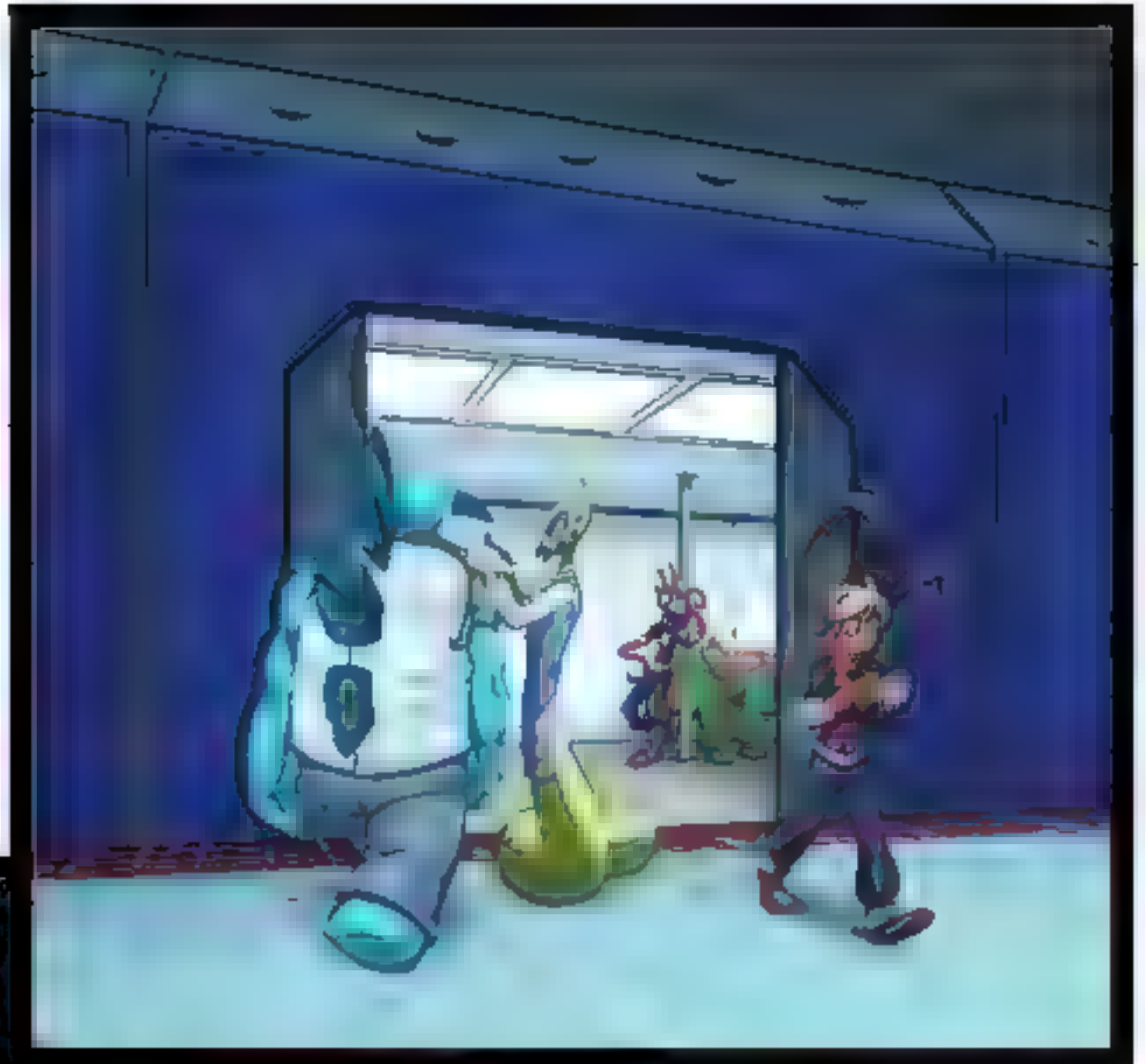
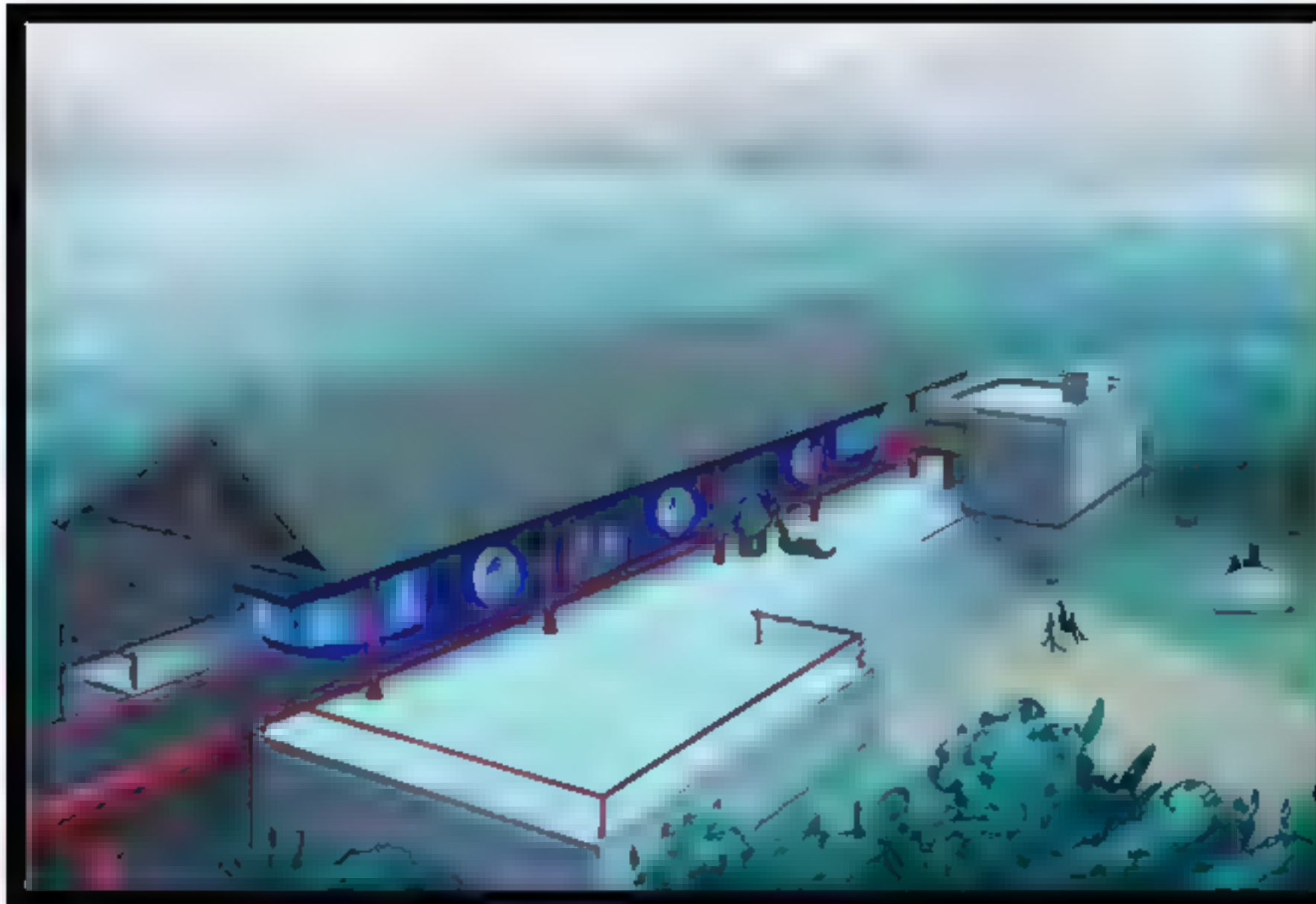
HERE.

GO HAVE
FUN, FILL ME
IN LATER.

OH I'LL HAVE
FUN, ARRRIGHT...
STARTING WITH
A CERTAIN LORD
FUZZBUCKET.

HAVE YOU
SEEN OZ?

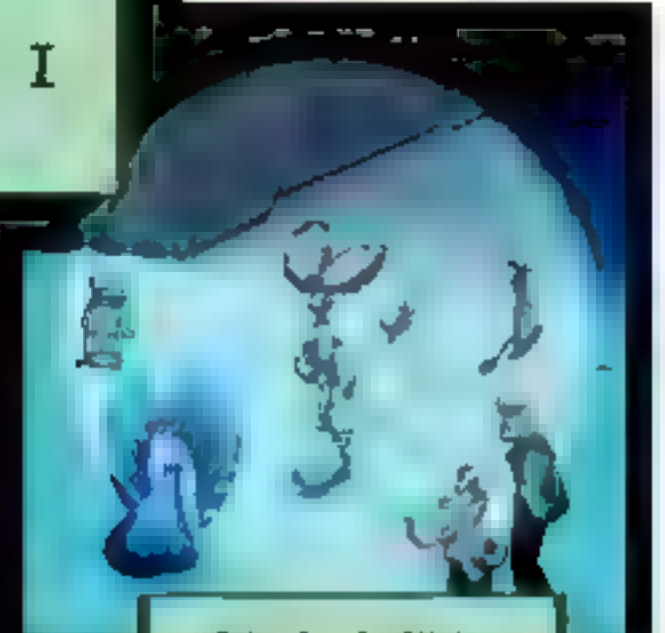




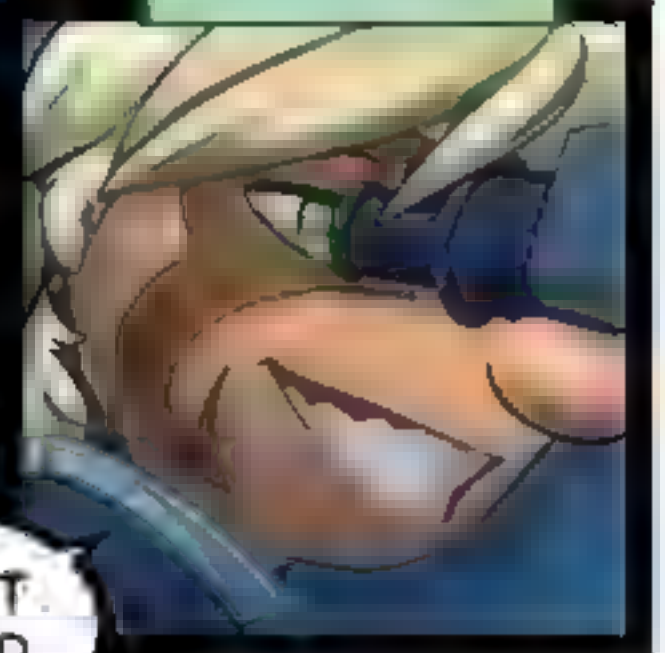
HMM.



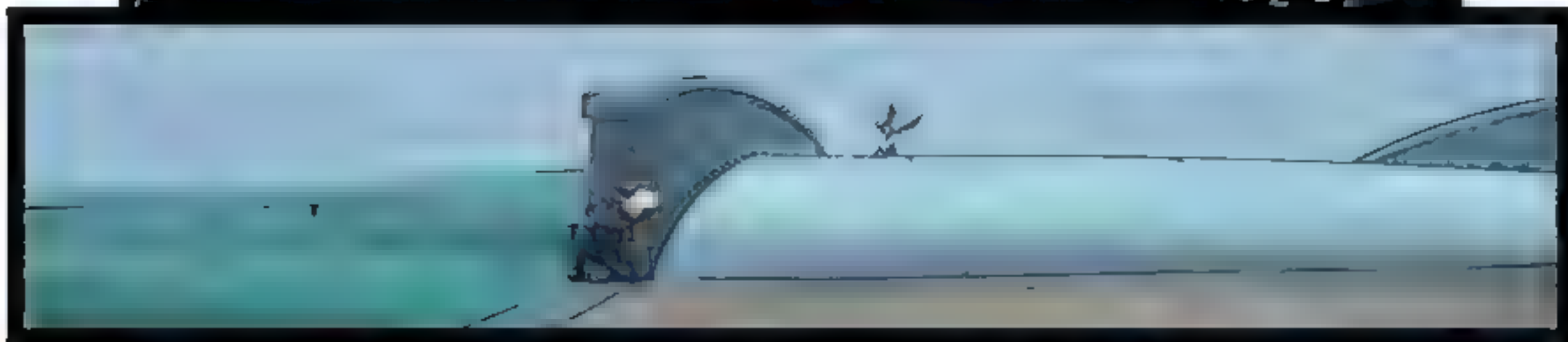
NOT QUITE
THE FUZZBUCKET I
HAD IN MIND.



BUT STILL...



TARGET
AQUIRED.



RAWRI

GAH!!







...OKAY.
THEN, UH...

HOW 'BOUT I
DROP BY THE
DORMS LATER?

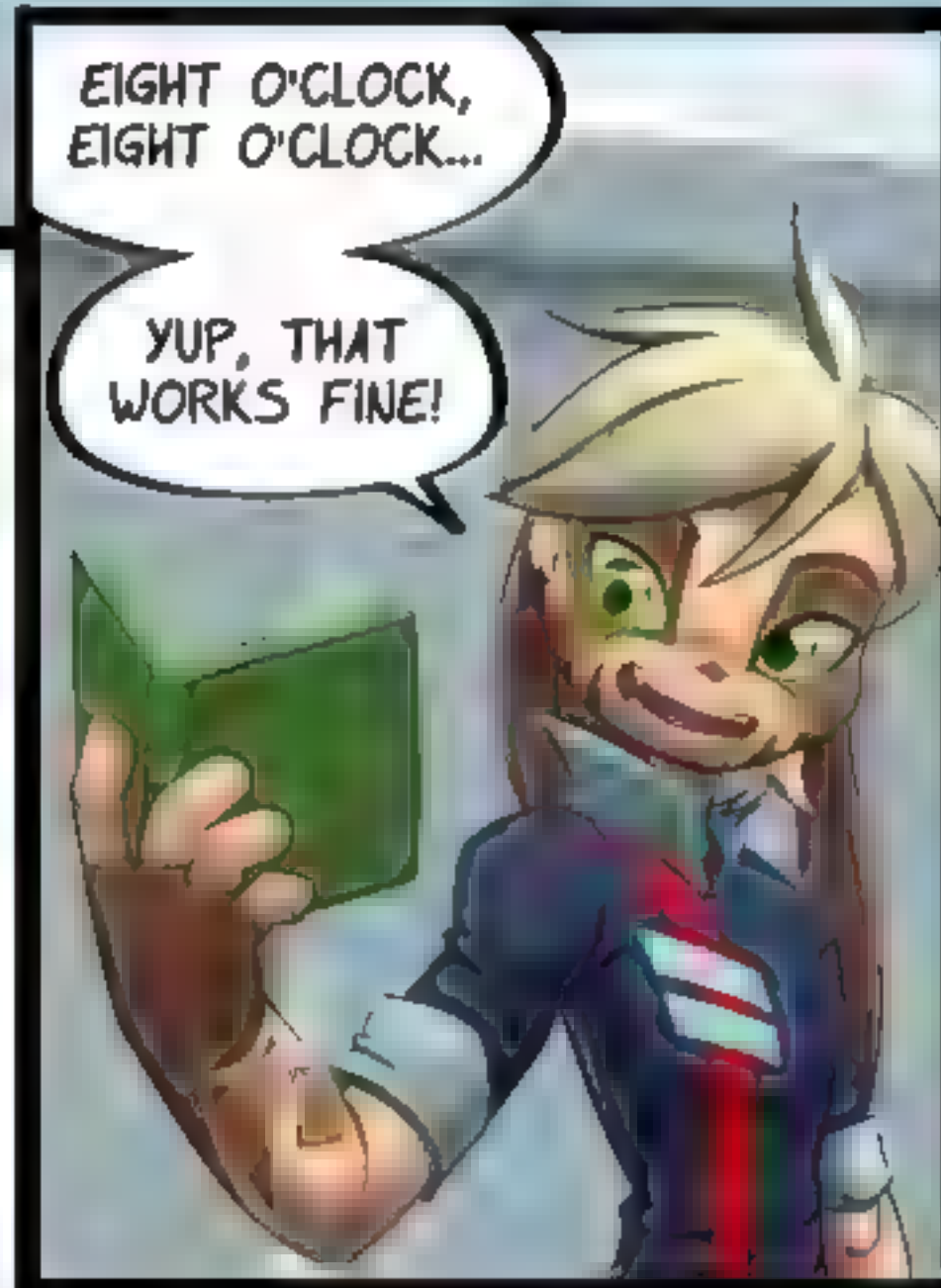
I'M SURE YOU'VE
MANAGED TO COLLECT
ANOTHER **FIVE HUNDRED**
NEW **'WOW FALLAN YOU**
GOTTA PLAY THIS'
GAMES SINCE LAST
TIME I VISITED.

PPPPPPFF
PLEASE.

...THERE'S ONLY
LIKE SEVEN
NEW ONES.



GOOD, THEN
HOW'S EIGHT
O'CLOCK SOUND?



EIGHT O'CLOCK,
EIGHT O'CLOCK...

YUP, THAT
WORKS FINE!

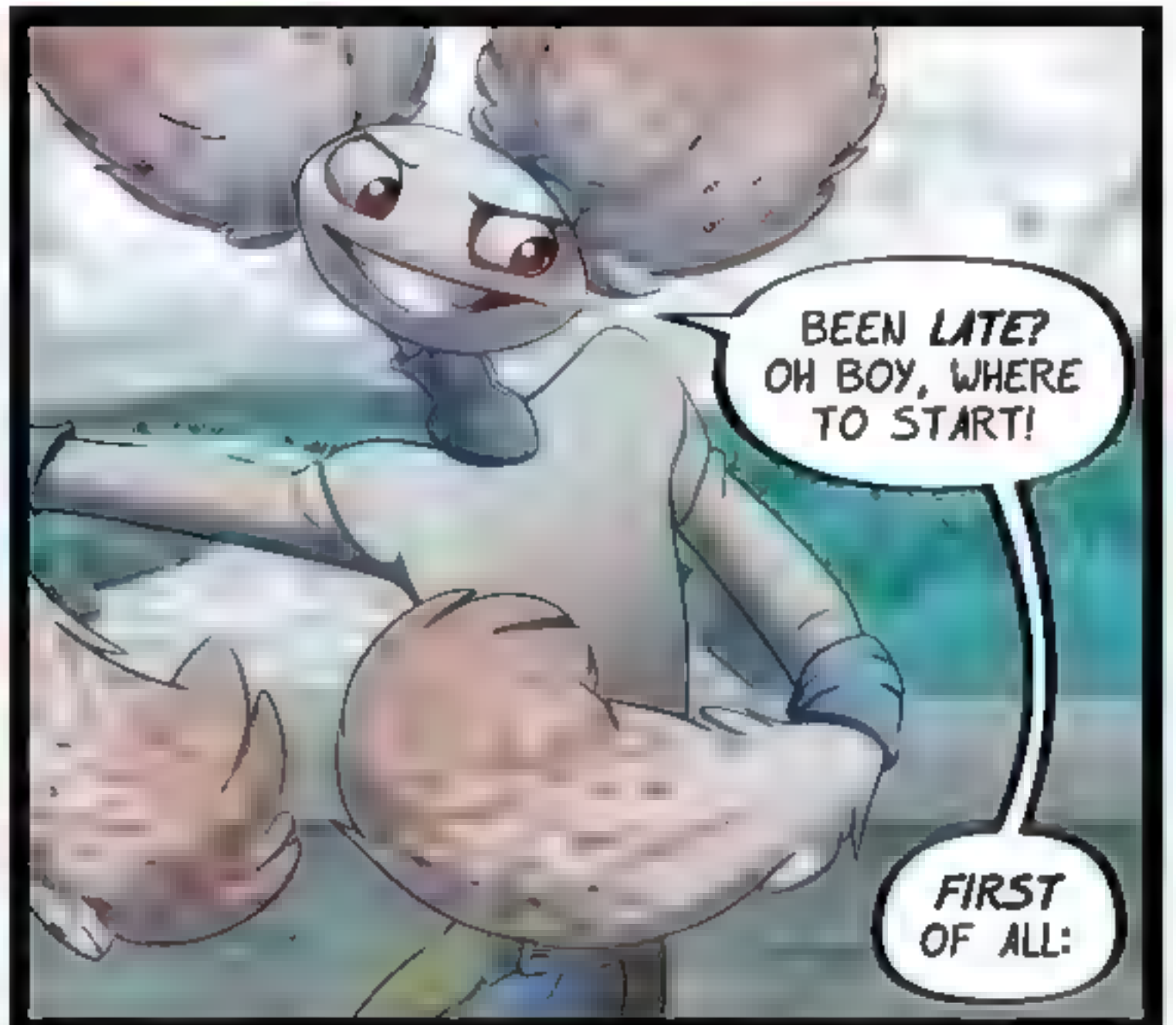


YOU SURE?
THAT LOOKS LIKE
A **PLANNER**.

DON'T GO OFF
PLANNING THINGS
THAT'LL MAKE YOU
LATE AGAIN.

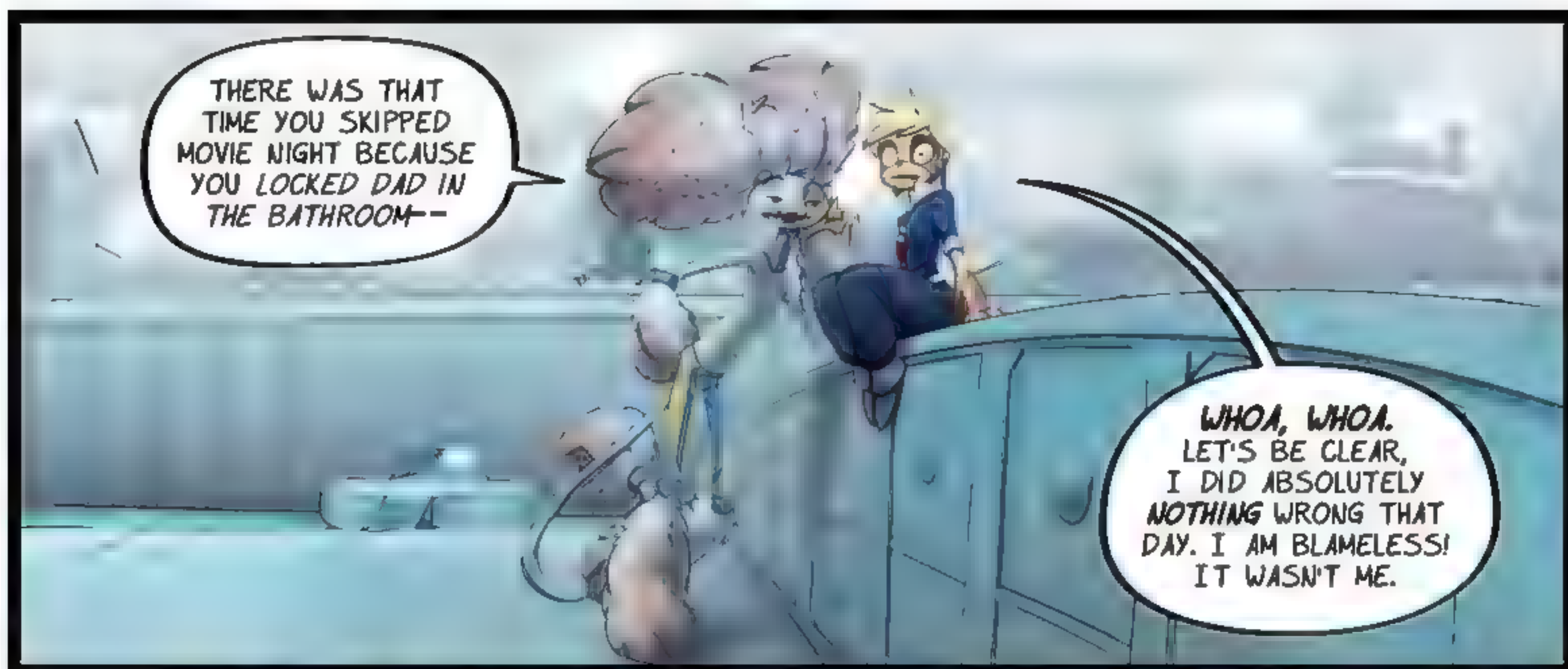


WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, AGAIN? WHEN
HAVE I **EVER--**



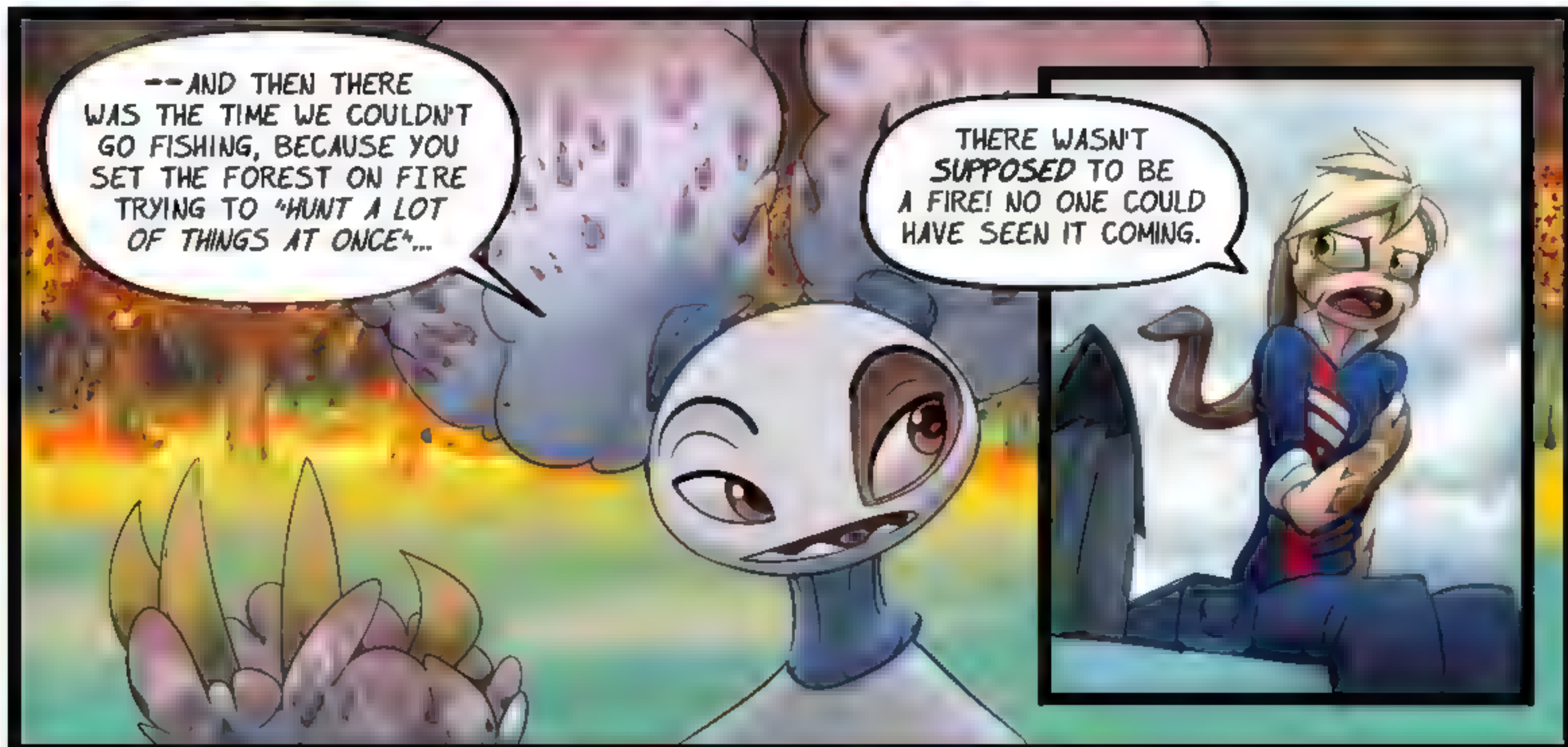
BEEN LATE?
OH BOY, WHERE
TO START!

FIRST
OF ALL:



THERE WAS THAT
TIME YOU SKIPPED
MOVIE NIGHT BECAUSE
YOU LOCKED DAD IN
THE BATHROOM--

WHOA, WHOA.
LET'S BE CLEAR,
I DID ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING WRONG THAT
DAY. I AM BLAMELESS!
IT WASN'T ME.

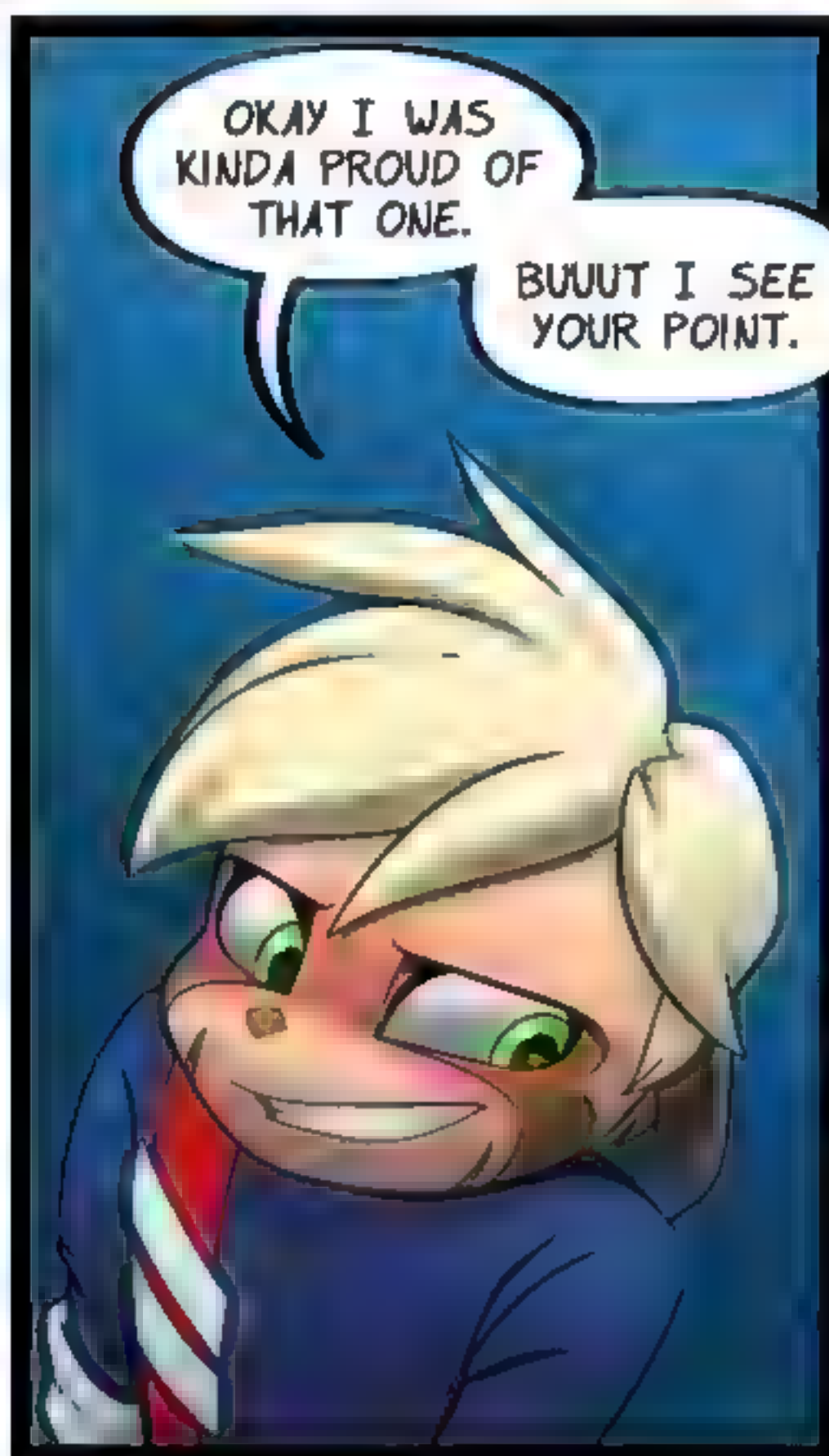


--AND THEN THERE
WAS THE TIME WE COULDN'T
GO FISHING, BECAUSE YOU
SET THE FOREST ON FIRE
TRYING TO "HUNT A LOT
OF THINGS AT ONCE"...

THERE WASN'T
SUPPOSED TO BE
A FIRE! NO ONE COULD
HAVE SEEN IT COMING.

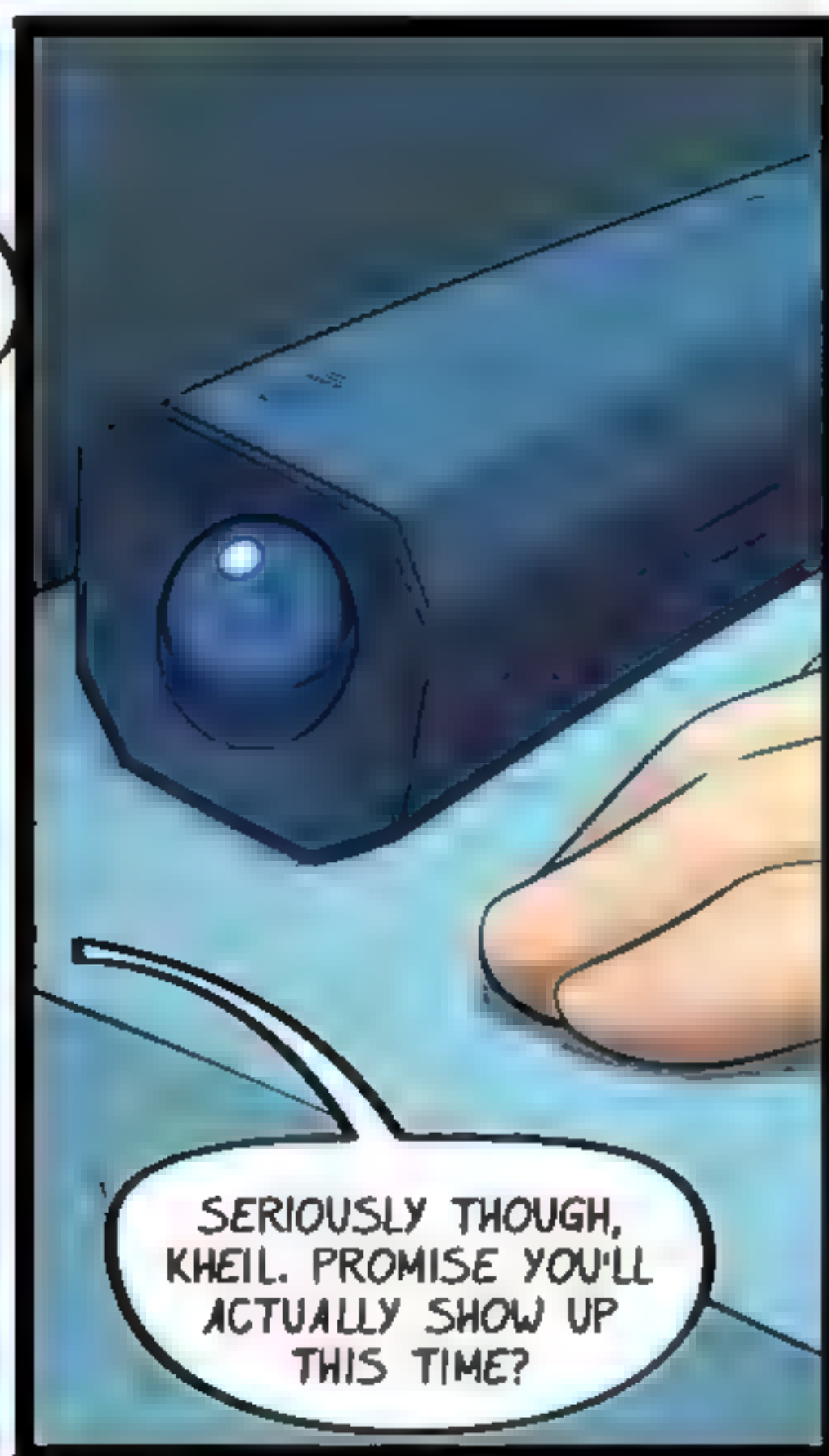


...AND THERE WAS
THE TIME WE MISSED
THAT VISITING DANCE
TROUPE BECAUSE "ART
TAKES A LONG TIME
OR WHATEVER."



OKAY I WAS
KINDA PROUD OF
THAT ONE.

BUUUT I SEE
YOUR POINT.



SERIOUSLY THOUGH,
KHEIL. PROMISE YOU'LL
ACTUALLY SHOW UP
THIS TIME?



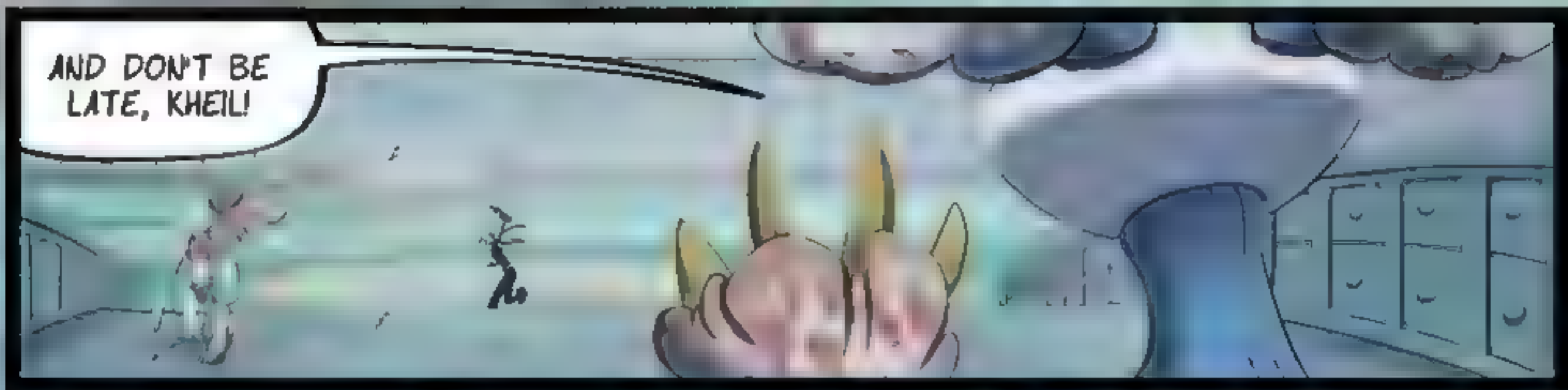
GOT IT!
EIGHT O'CLOCK.



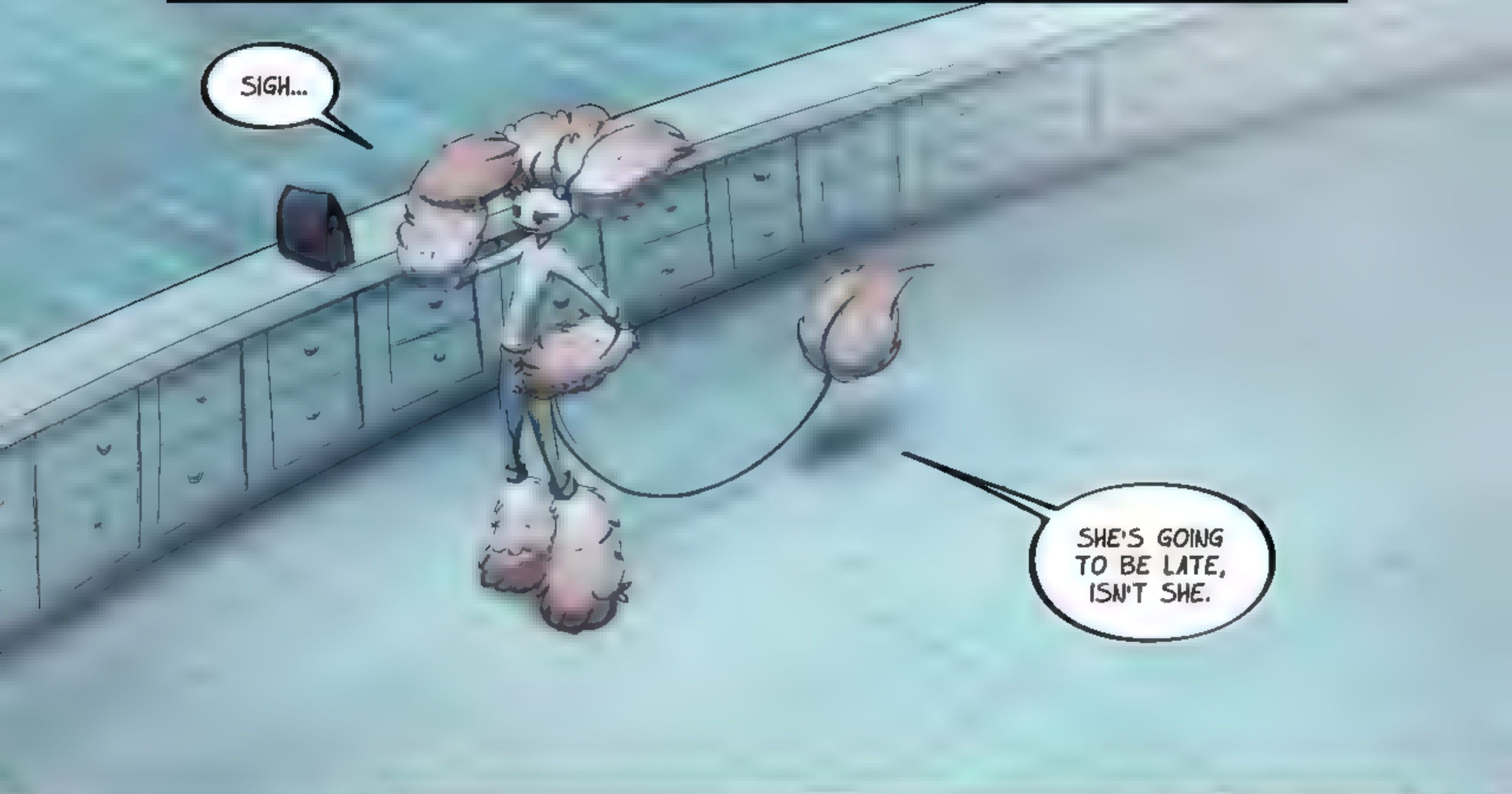
EIGHT O'CLOCK
SHARP, RIGHT?



EIGHT
O'CLOCK!



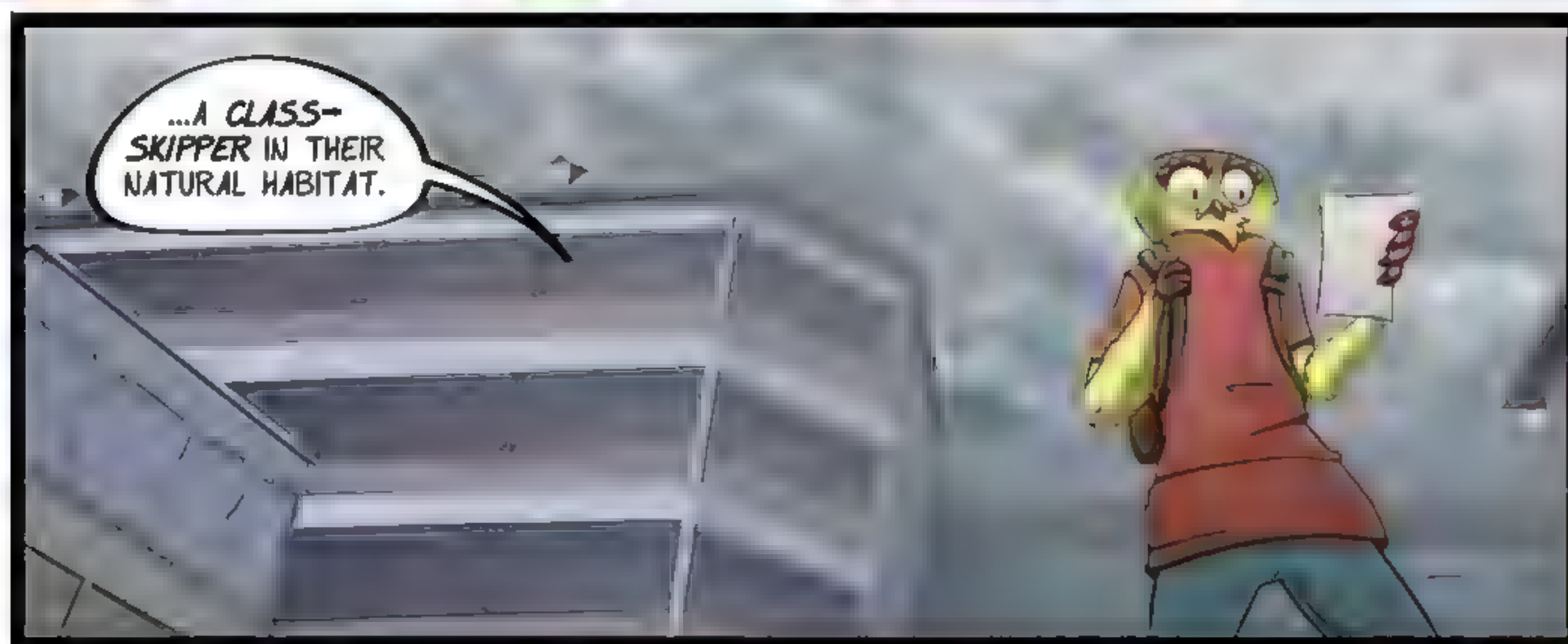
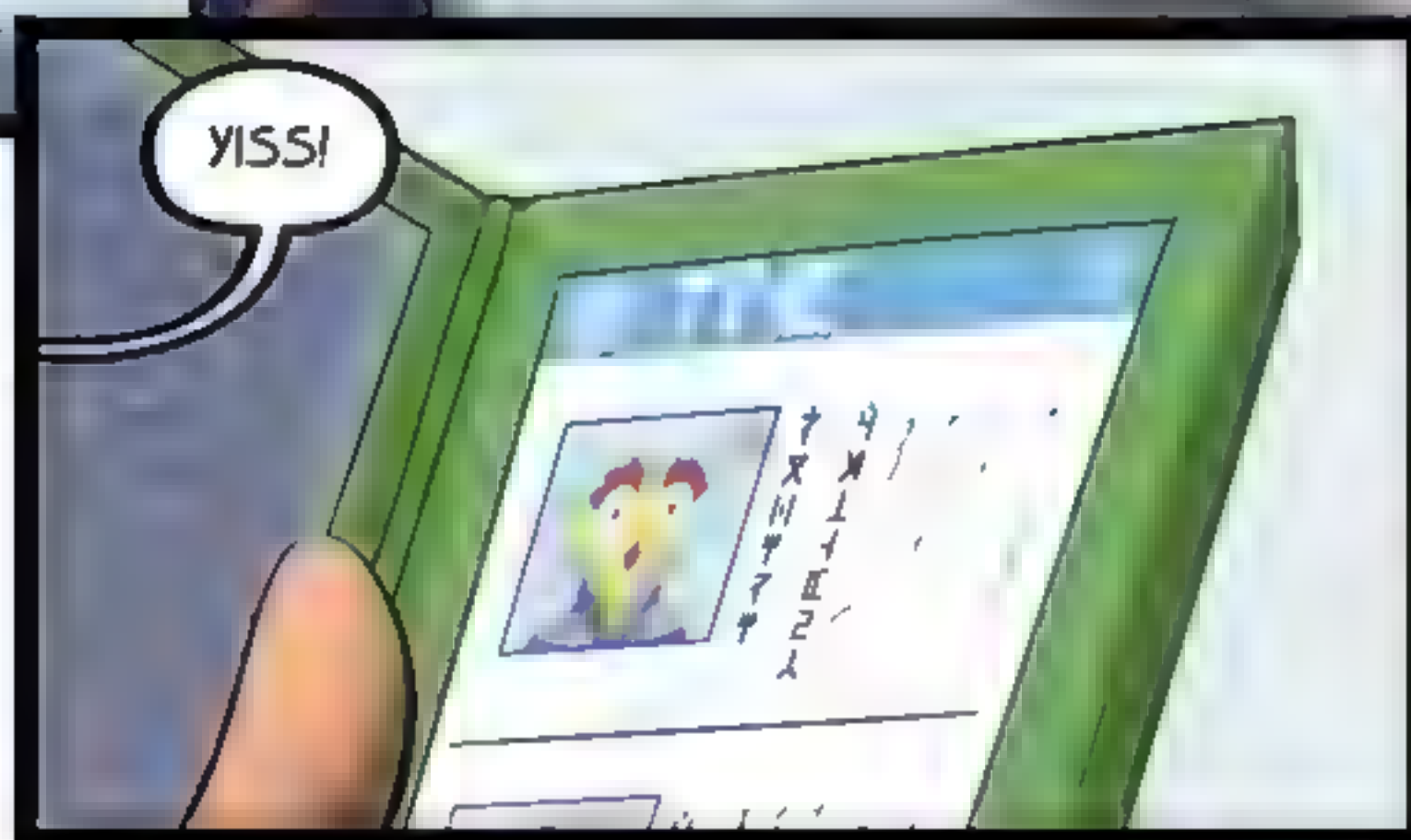
AND DON'T BE
LATE, KHELI!



SIGH...

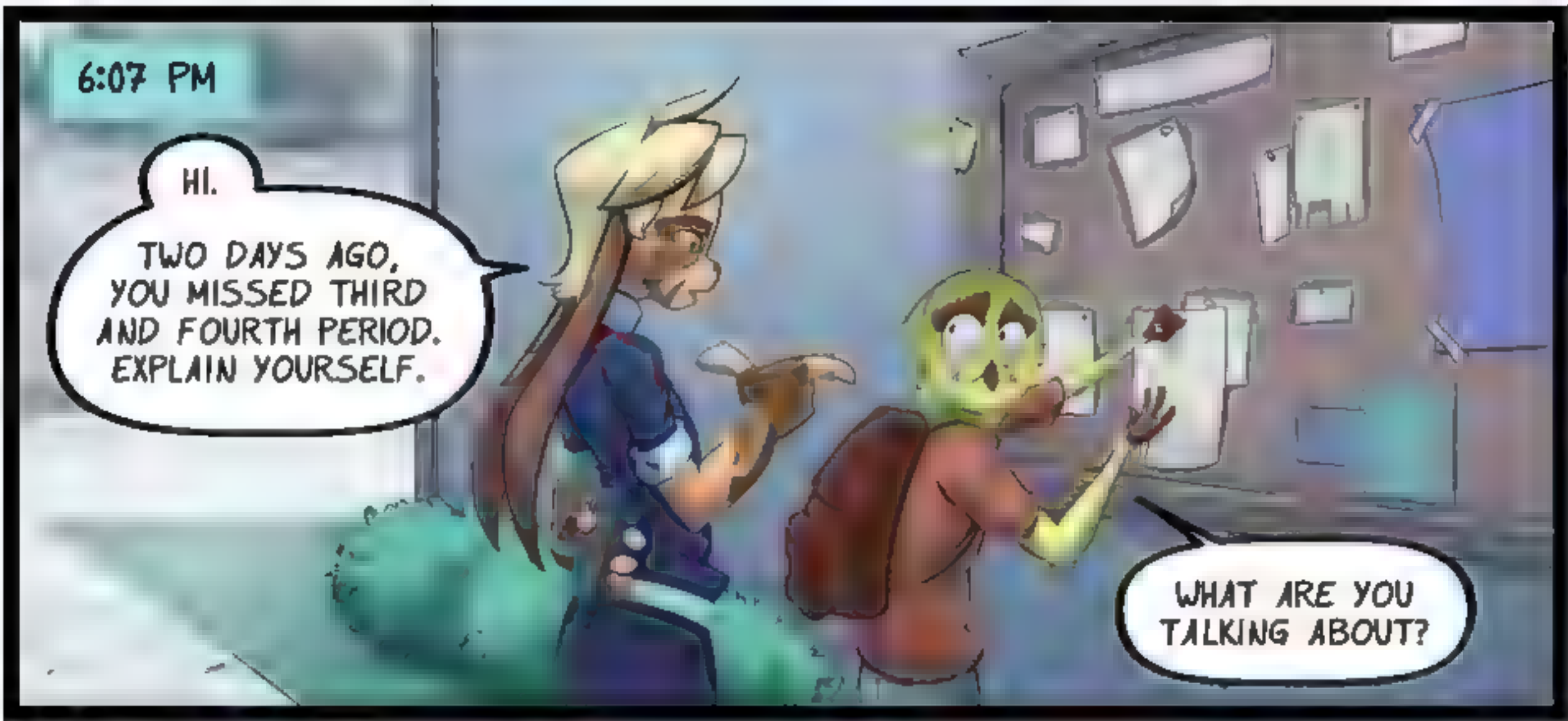
SHE'S GOING
TO BE LATE,
ISN'T SHE.

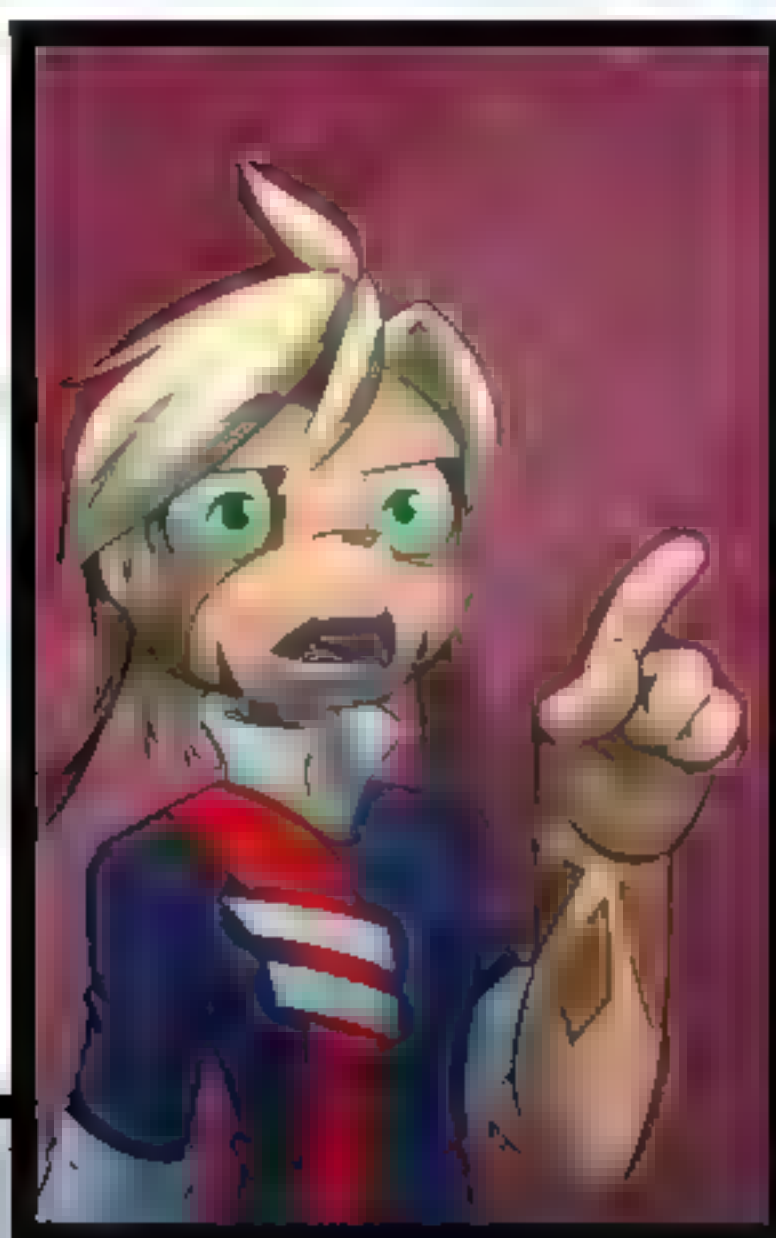
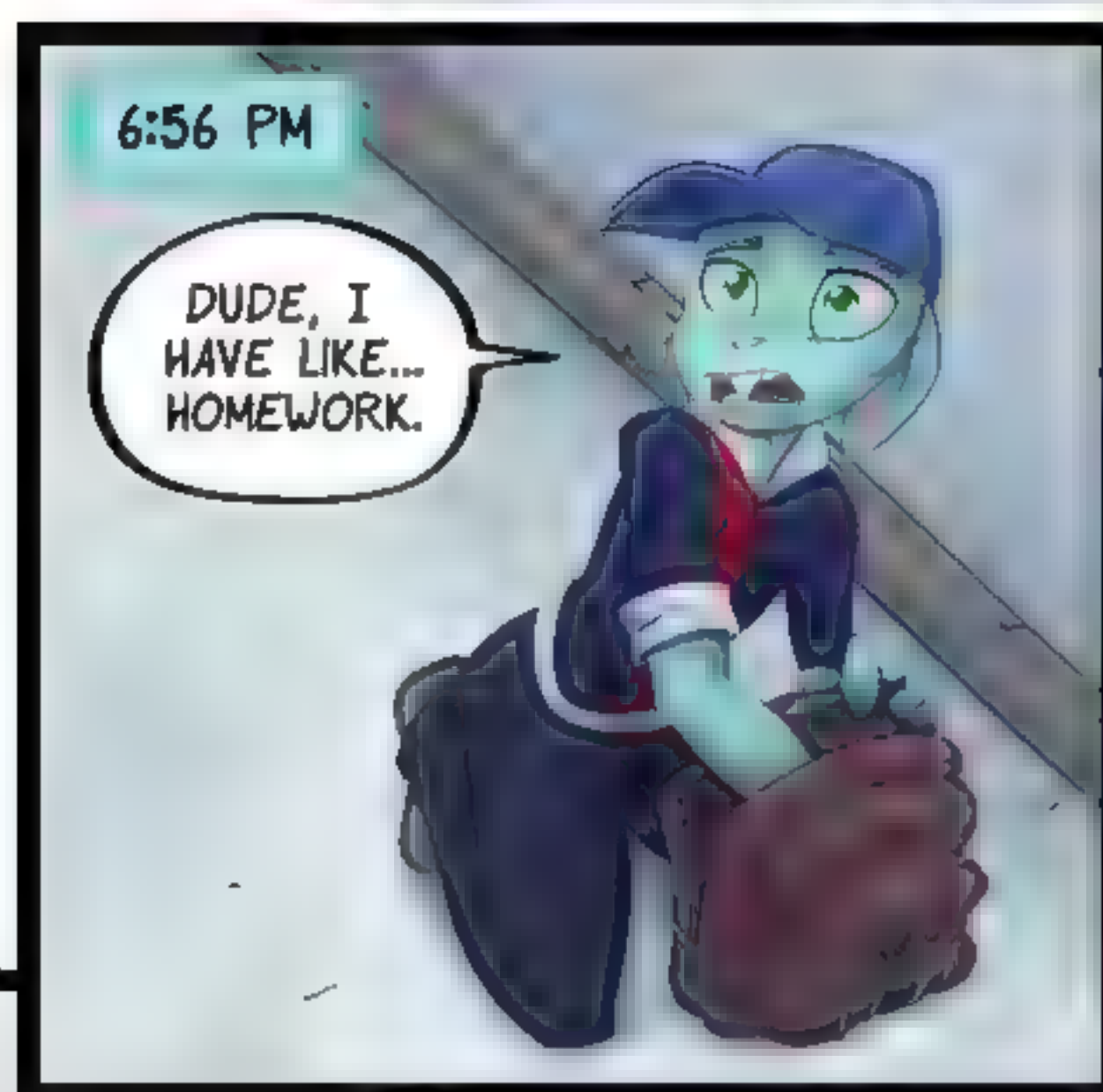
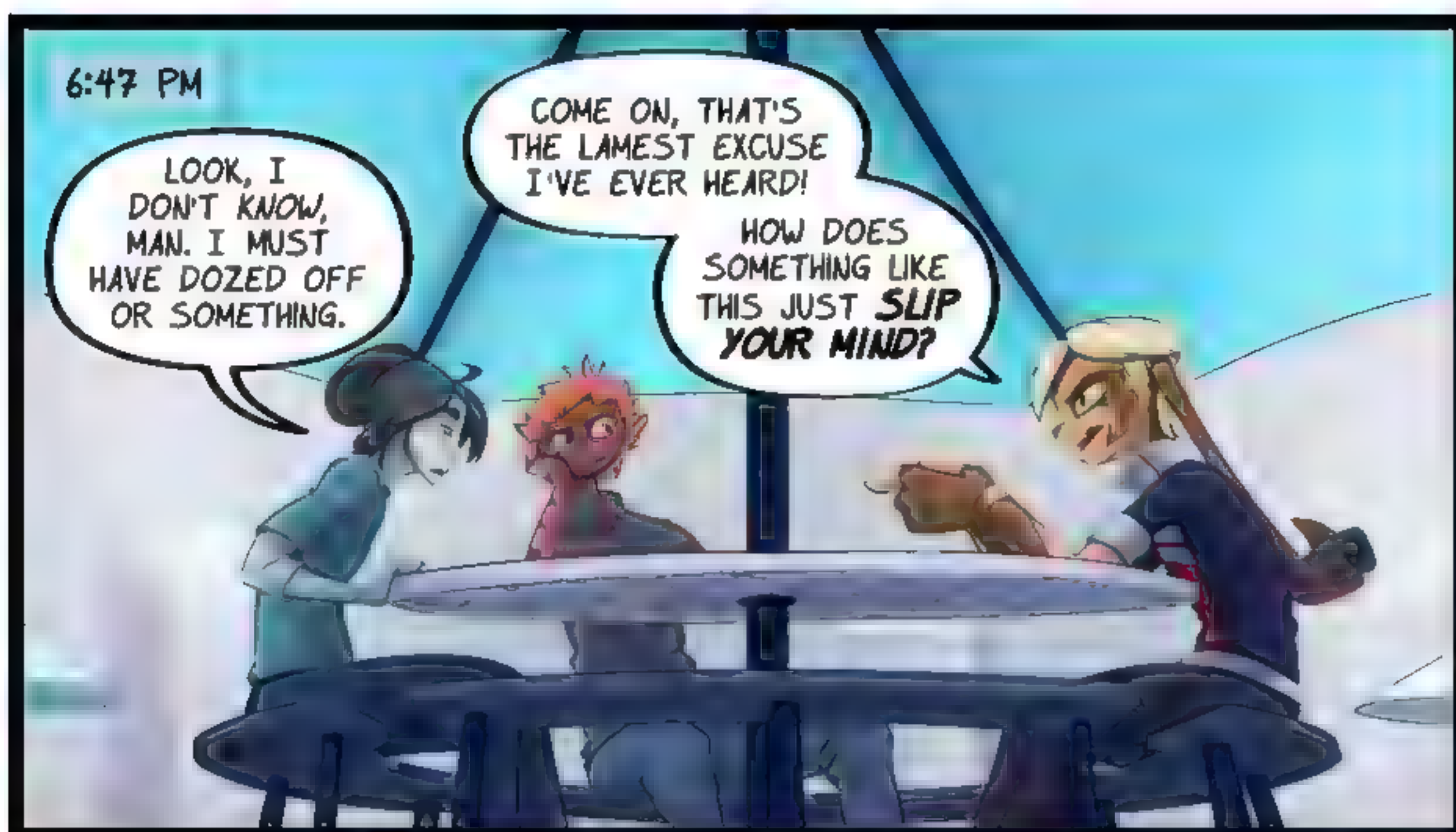
LATER:



63.94 SECONDS LATER:







TWO SECONDS
LATER...

--SO THAT'S IT?
NOTHING I'VE JUST
SAID MATTERS?

I DID NOT
SAY THAT.

LISTEN TO ME:
I *PROMISE* YOU,
THE HEADMASTER
HAS VERY GOOD
REASONS FOR HIS
HIRING CHOICES.

YOU KNOW HIS
OTHER STAFF PICKS
TURNED OUT WELL.
JUST LOOK AT OUR
SECURITY CHIEF!

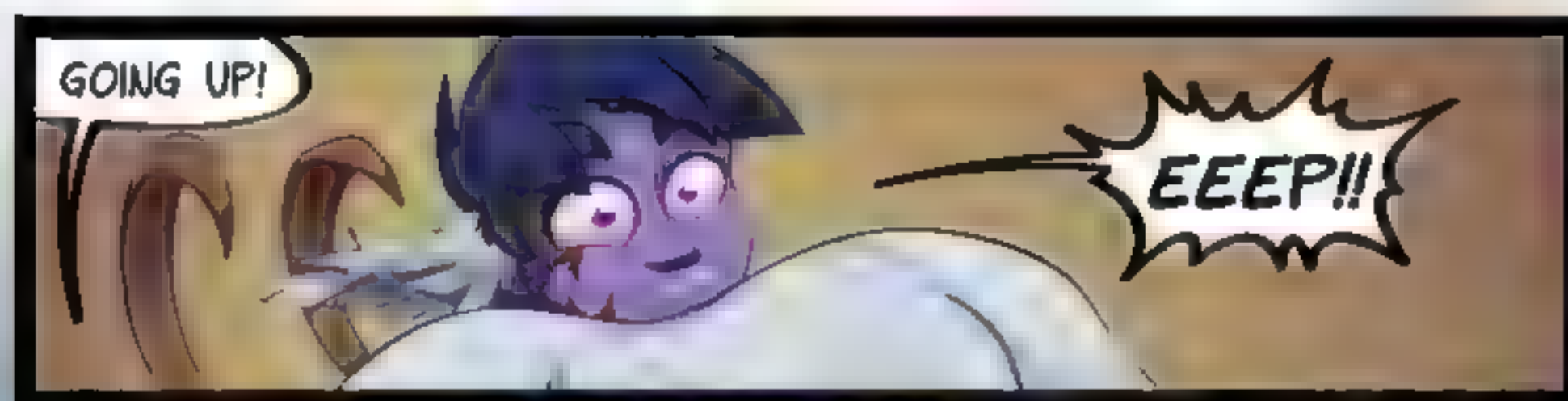
REALLY, I WISH
YOU WOULD TAKE MY
SUGGESTION TO SEE
A STUDENT COUNSELOR
ABOUT YOUR--

I DON'T NEED
COUNSELING,
DR. SARAN!

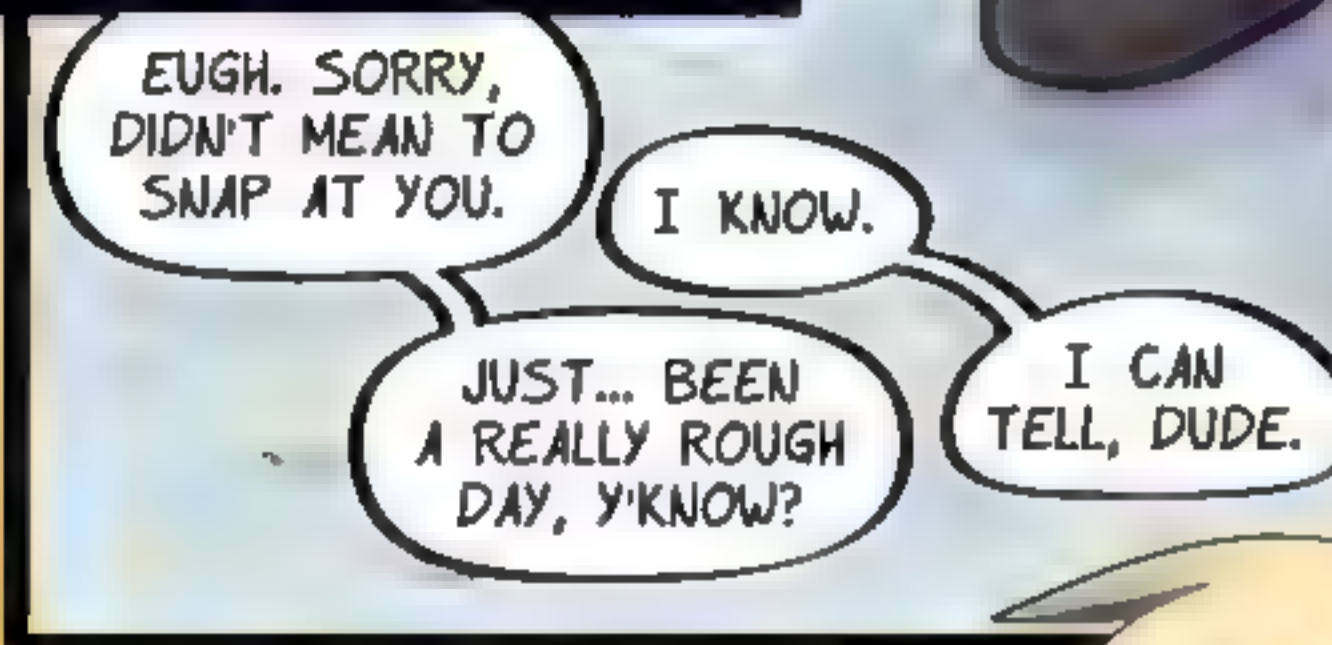
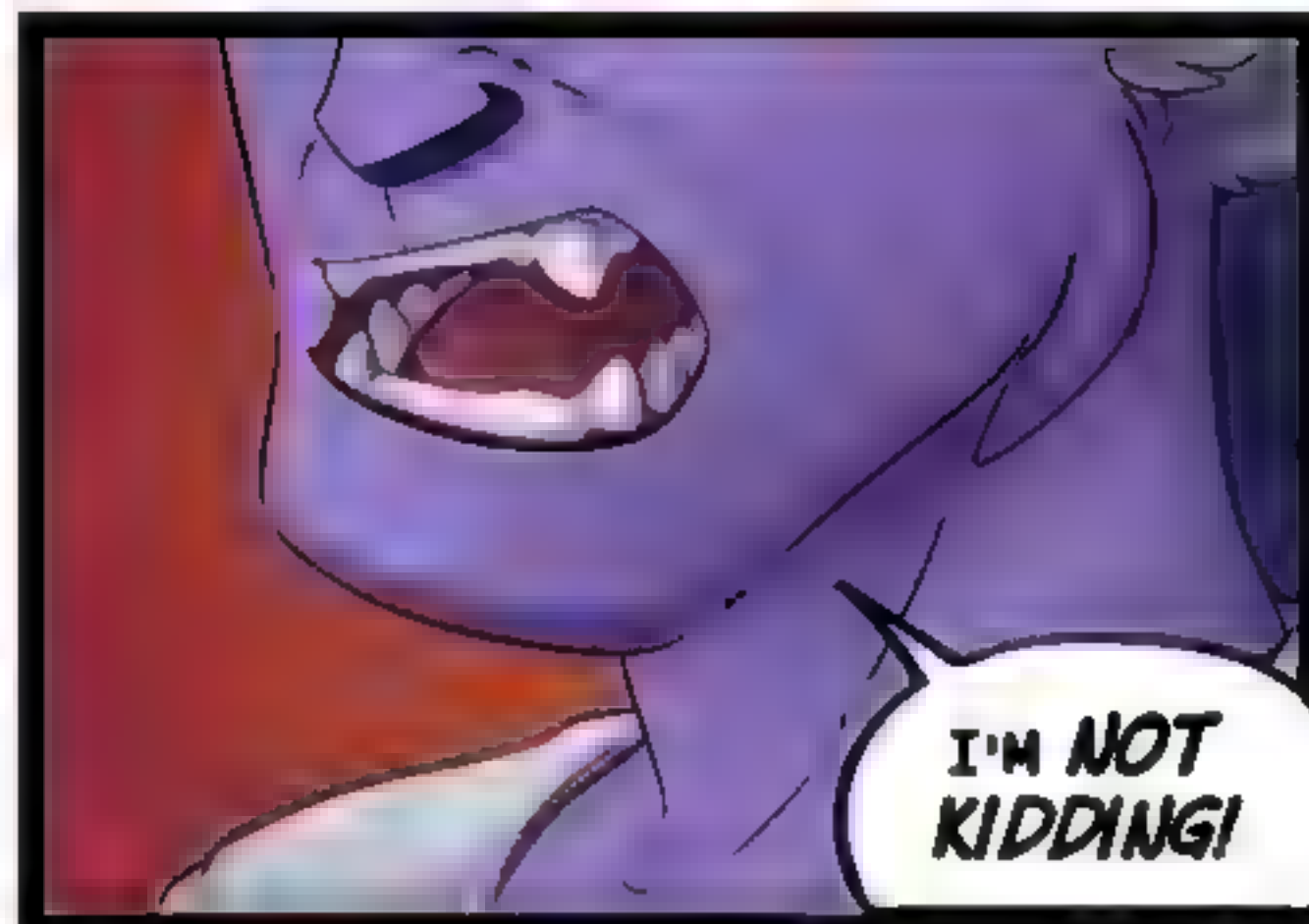
WHAT I NEED IS
TO NOT HAVE TO LIVE
WITHIN RIFLE-RANGE
OF A PROFESSIONAL
MURDERER!

ASKING ME
TO GET HER FIRED
IS A POINTLESS
EXERCISE, OZ.

I ONLY CALL
THE SHOTS IN
THE INFIRMARY.









...DEPENDS.

CAN IT BE
A LOT OF
ICE CREAM?

ALL. THE
ICE CREAM.

HEH. ARRRIGHT,
SOUNDS FAIR.

SO, UH...
HOW COME I'M
TRUANT NUMBER
SEVEN?

CAUSE I ALREADY
TRACKED DOWN SIX
OTHERS IN THE
LAST HOUR.

IN **ONE HOUR**?
KHEIL, THE SCHOOL'S
LIKE A MILE WIDE--

A **THIRD**
OF A MILE.

YEAH, SAME
DIFFERENCE. HOW
DID YOU--

SHHH.
I HAVE
MY WAYS.

7:22 PM

... SO THIS NEW COACH, THOTZEV ZHTATZGHA, REALLY IS THE ONE, HUH?

YEAH, AND OF COURSE TAZHO'S THE ONE WHO BROUGHT HER HERE.

I GUESS THAT CONFIRMS IT'S NOT A WEIRD COINCIDENCE.

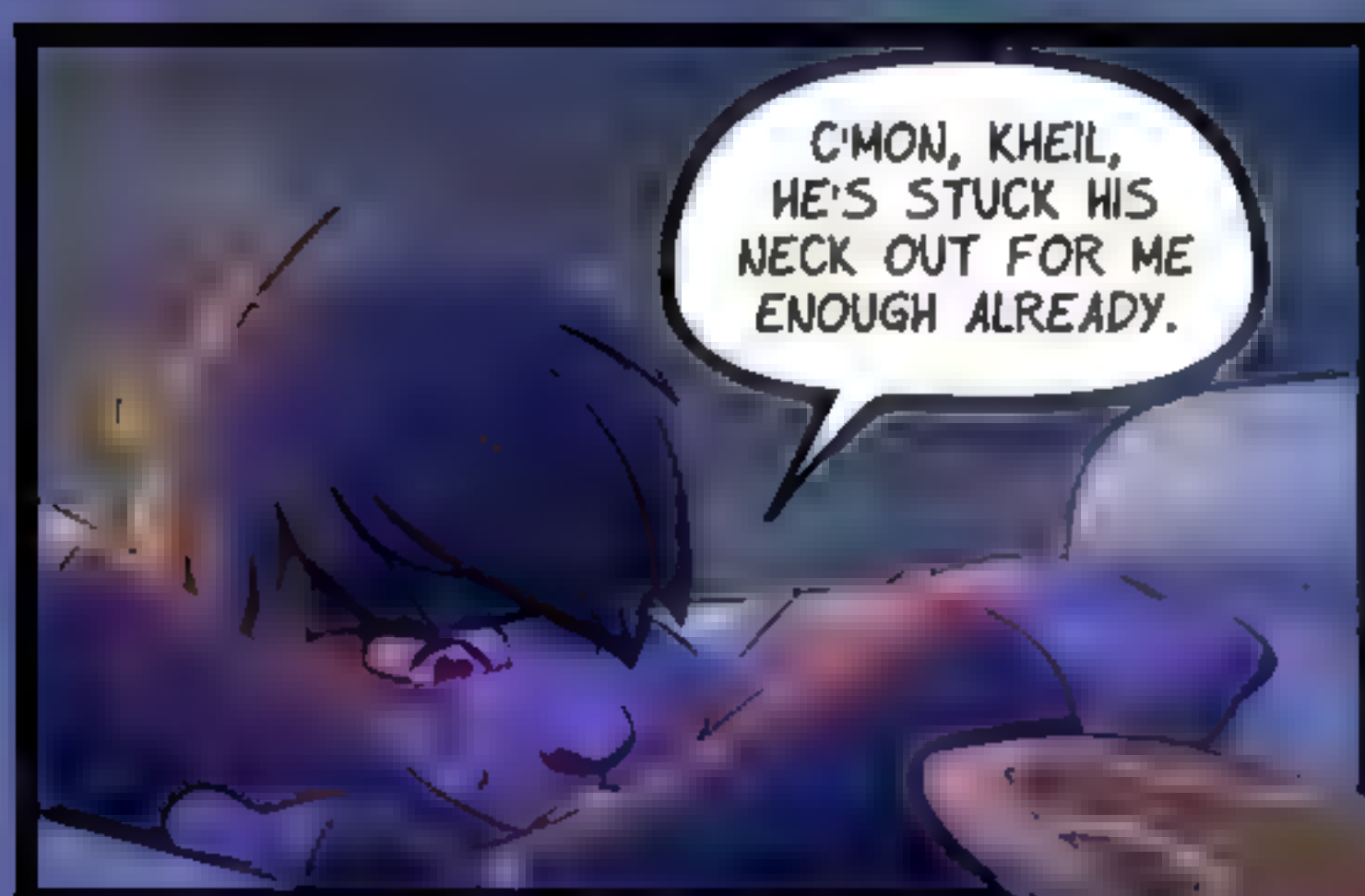
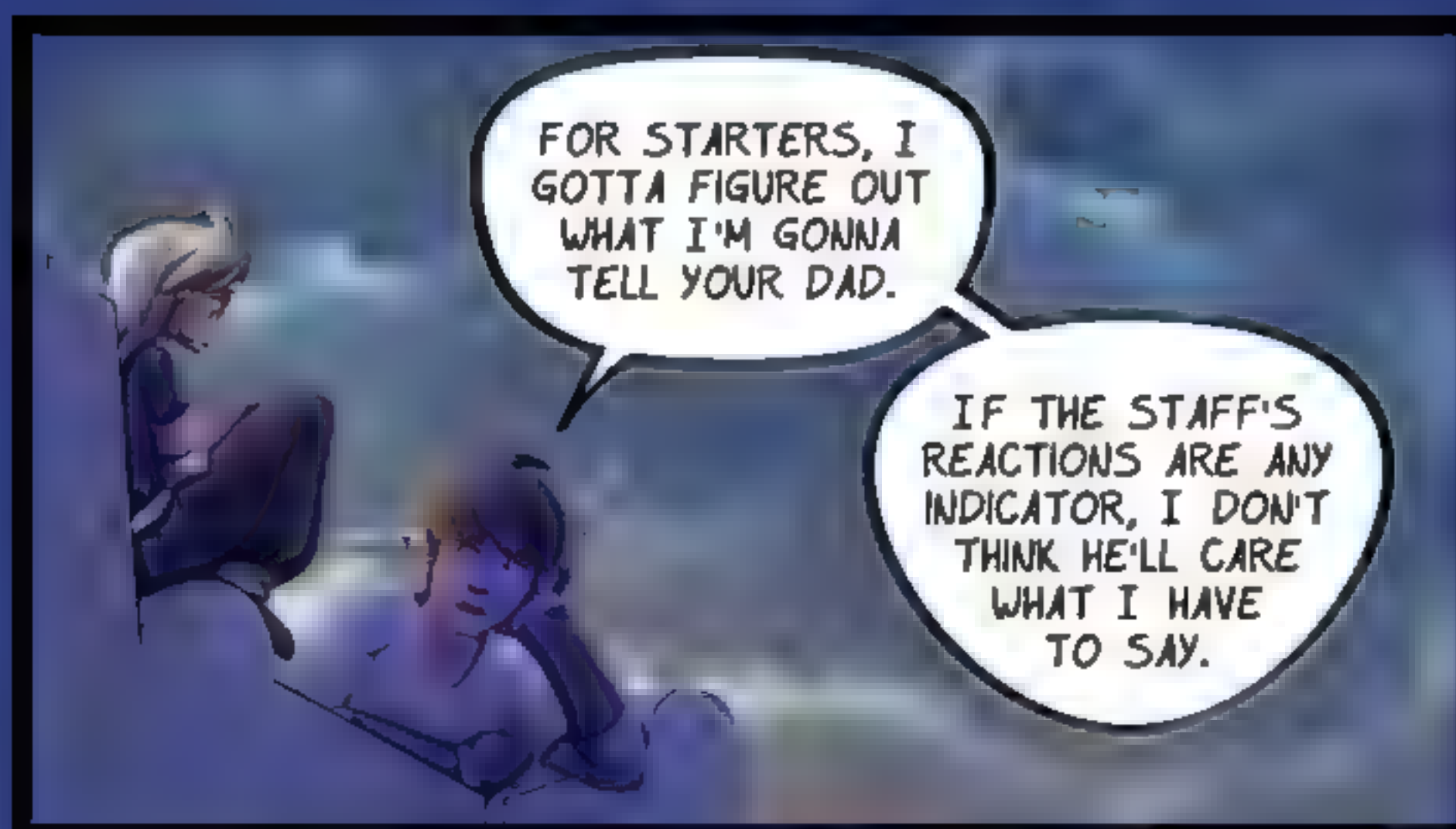
COULDN'T BE ANYWAY.

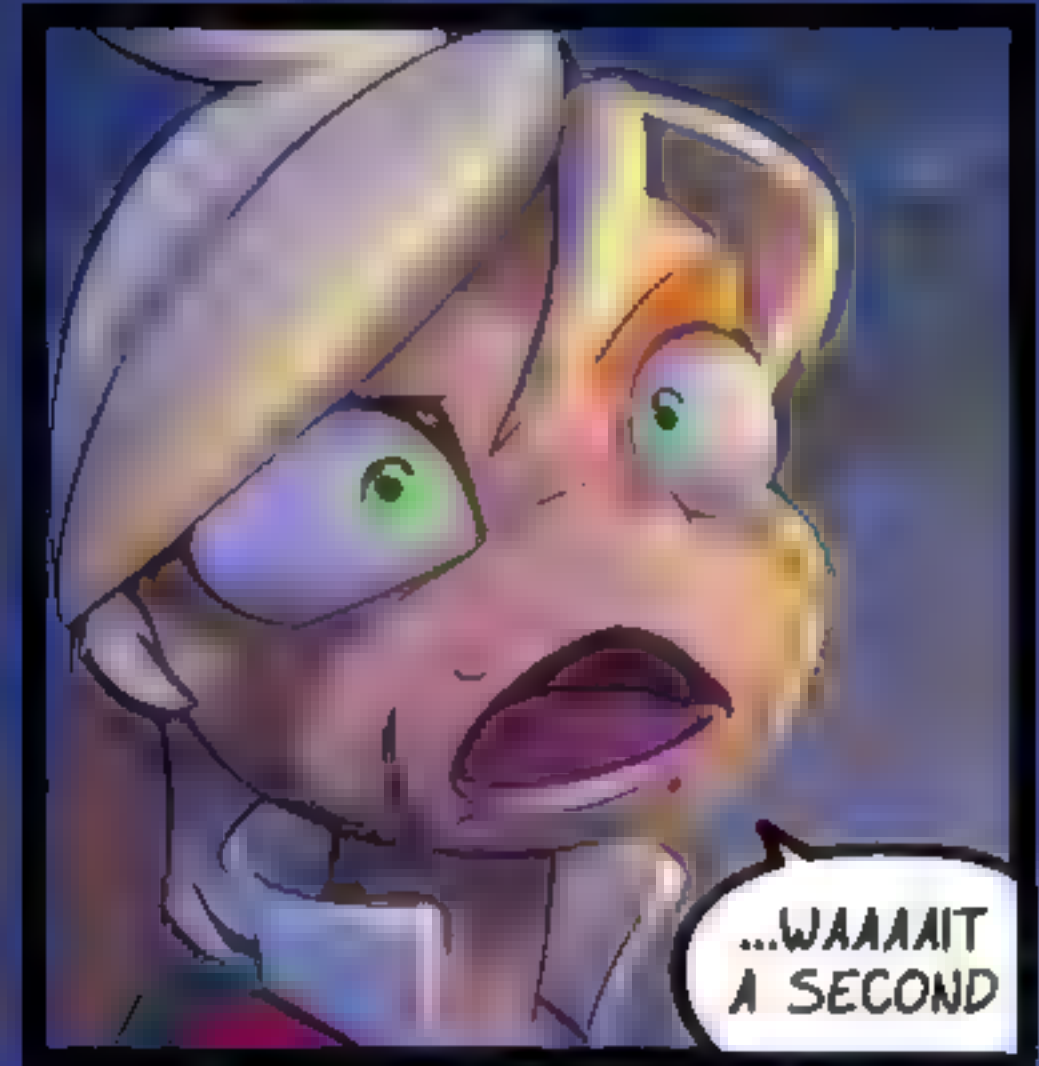
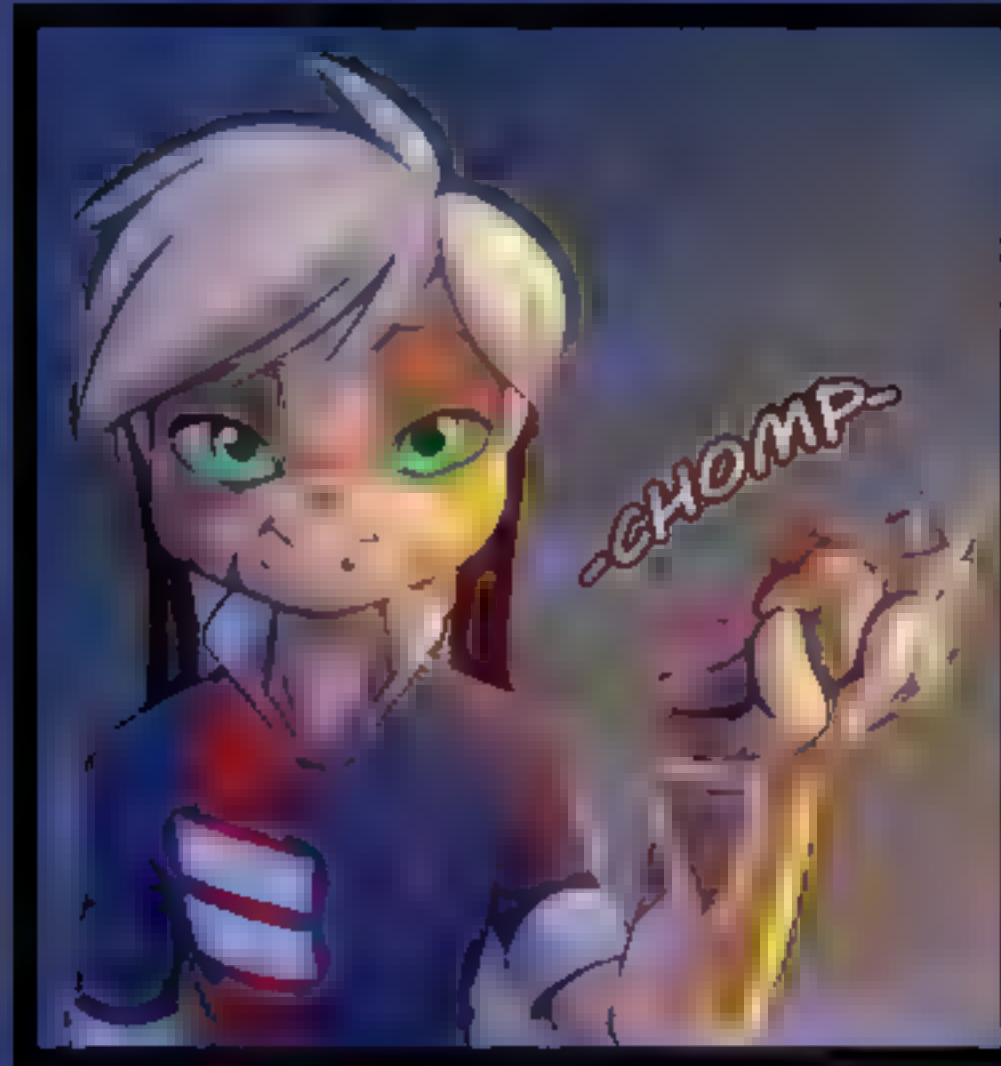
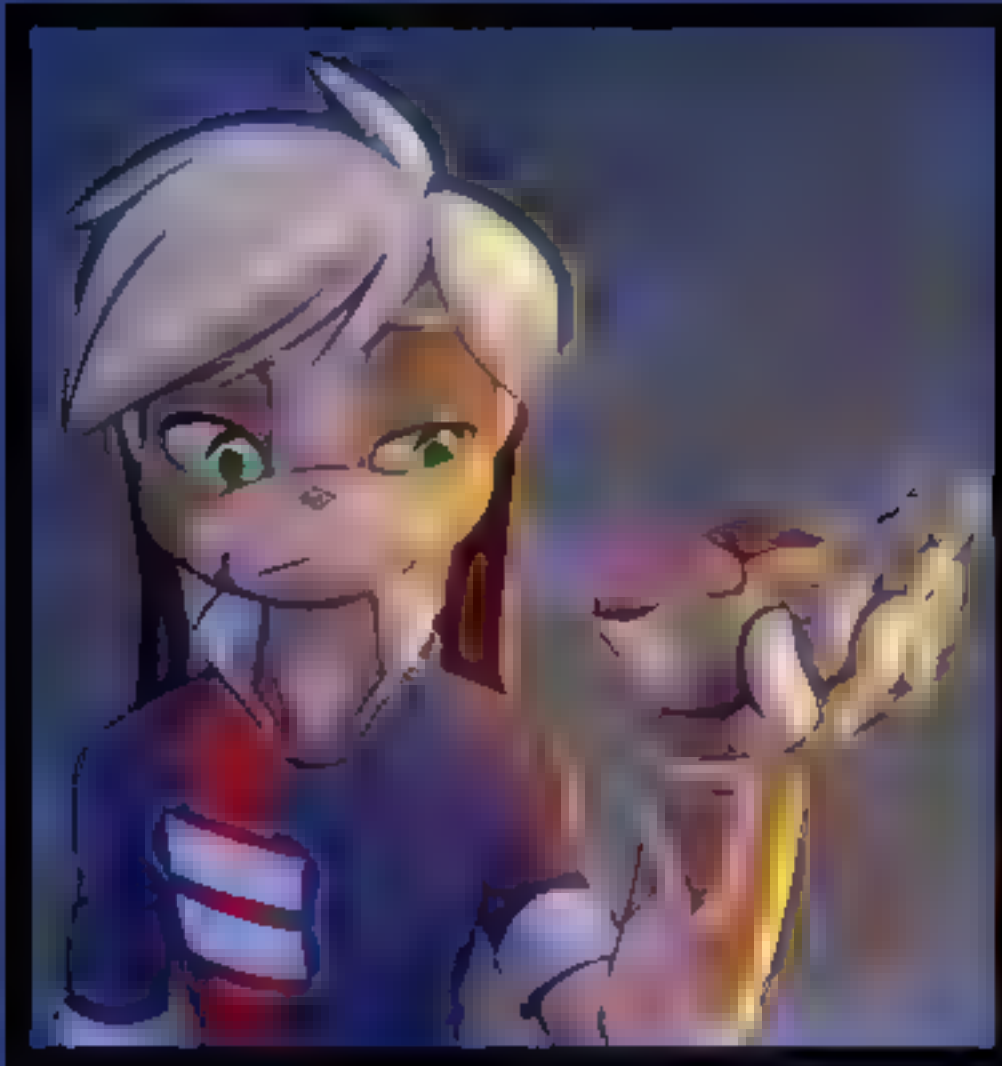
HAVE YOU **SEEN** HER? SHE'S NOT A FORGETTABLE FACE.

THERE'S NO WAY YOUR DAD WOULD JUST OVERLOOK THE "RHONUM BLACK-OPS AGENT" BIT ON HER RESUME.

SOMETHING'S UP WITH THIS.

SO HOW DO YOU WANNA HANDLE IT?





...CLASS-SKIPPERS
WHO CAN'T REMEMBER
SKIPPING CLASSES...

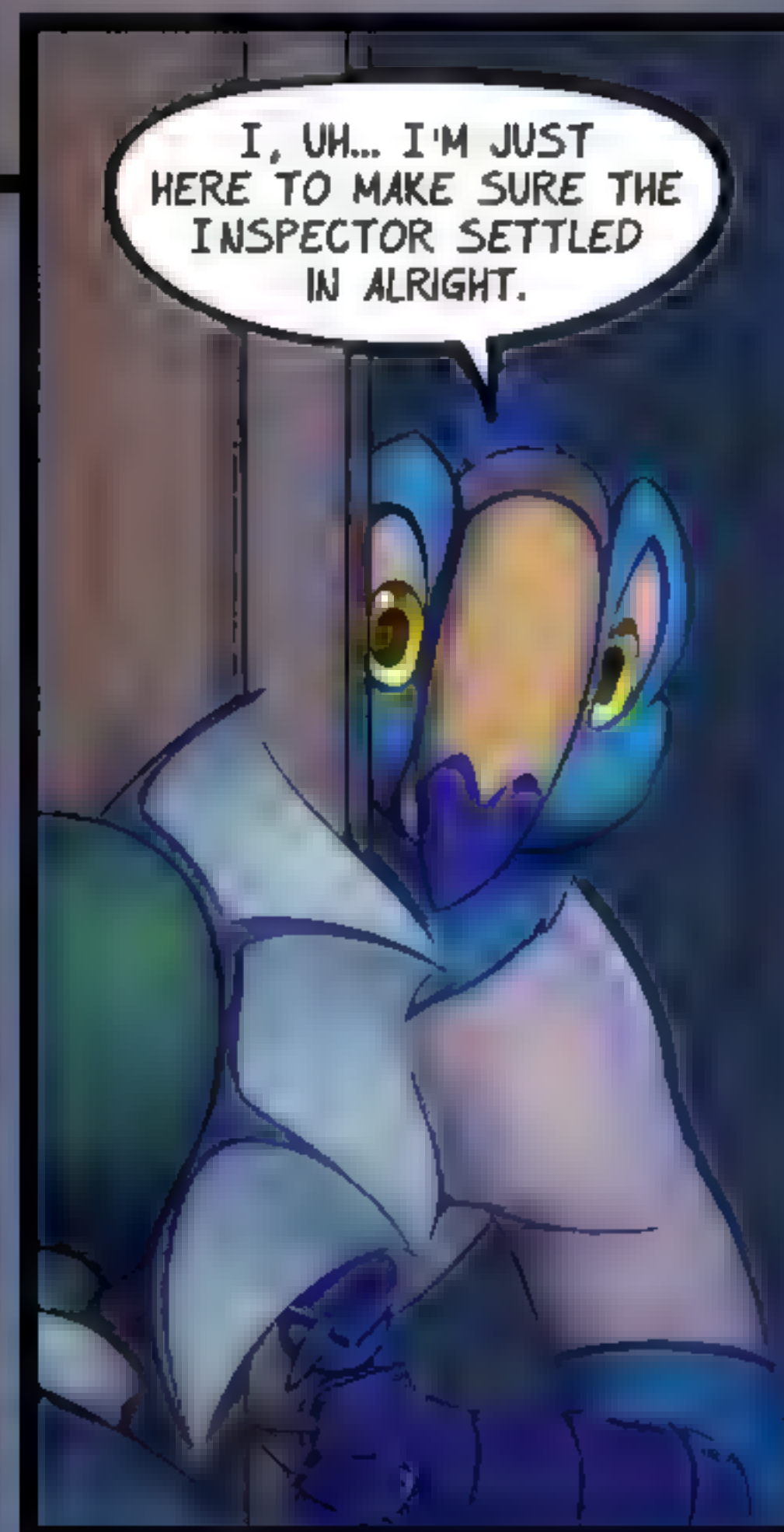
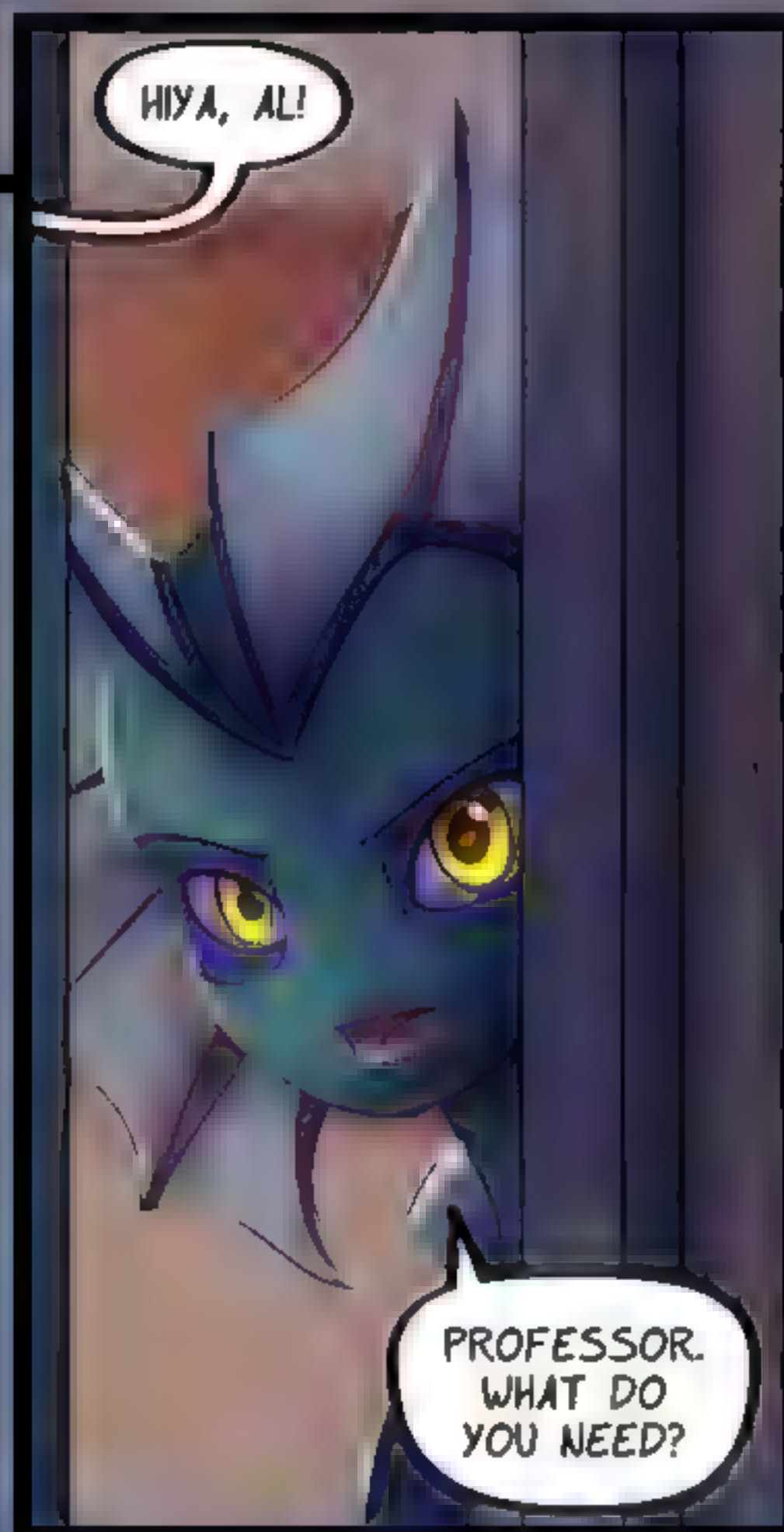
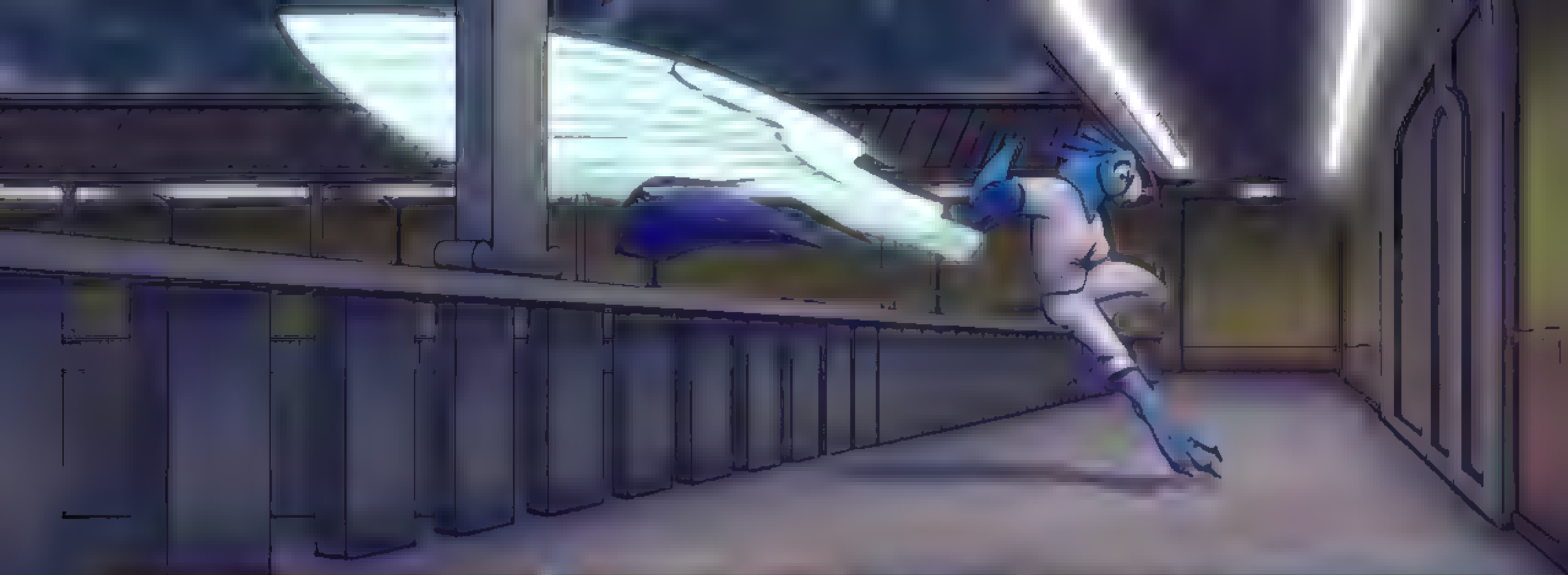
...HMM.

GASP!

NO, NOT THAT!
ANYTHING BUT THAT!

PFFFFFF YEAH
THAT'S TOTALLY
WHAT'S GOING ON.

ARRIGHT KHEIL,
LET'S GET BACK
TO WORK.





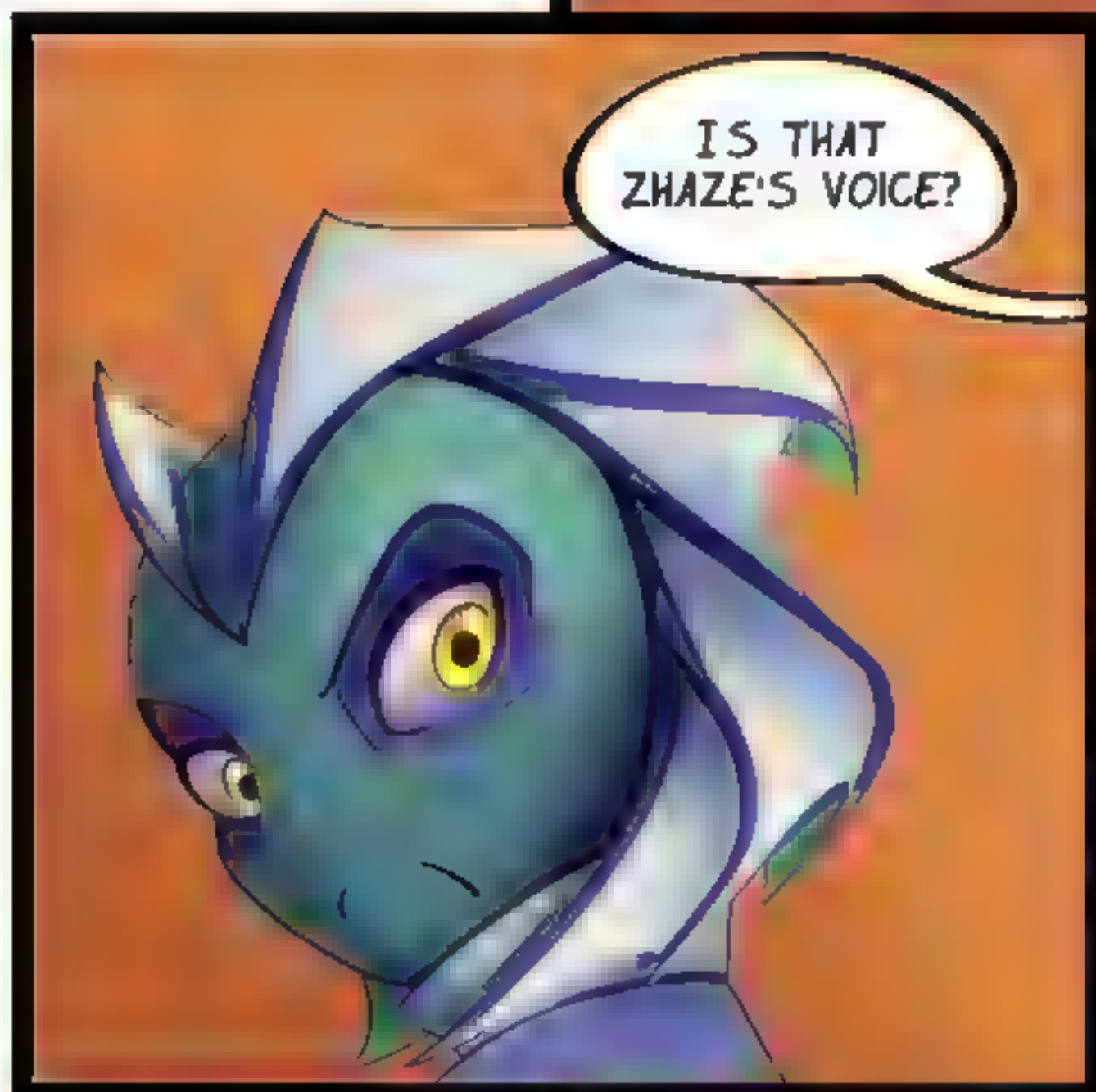
OH FOR GOODNESS' SAKE, AL, YOU KNOW I'M ON THE WHITELIST!

THEN STATE THE PURPOSE OF YOUR MEETING. I HAVE TO KEEP VISITOR LOGS.

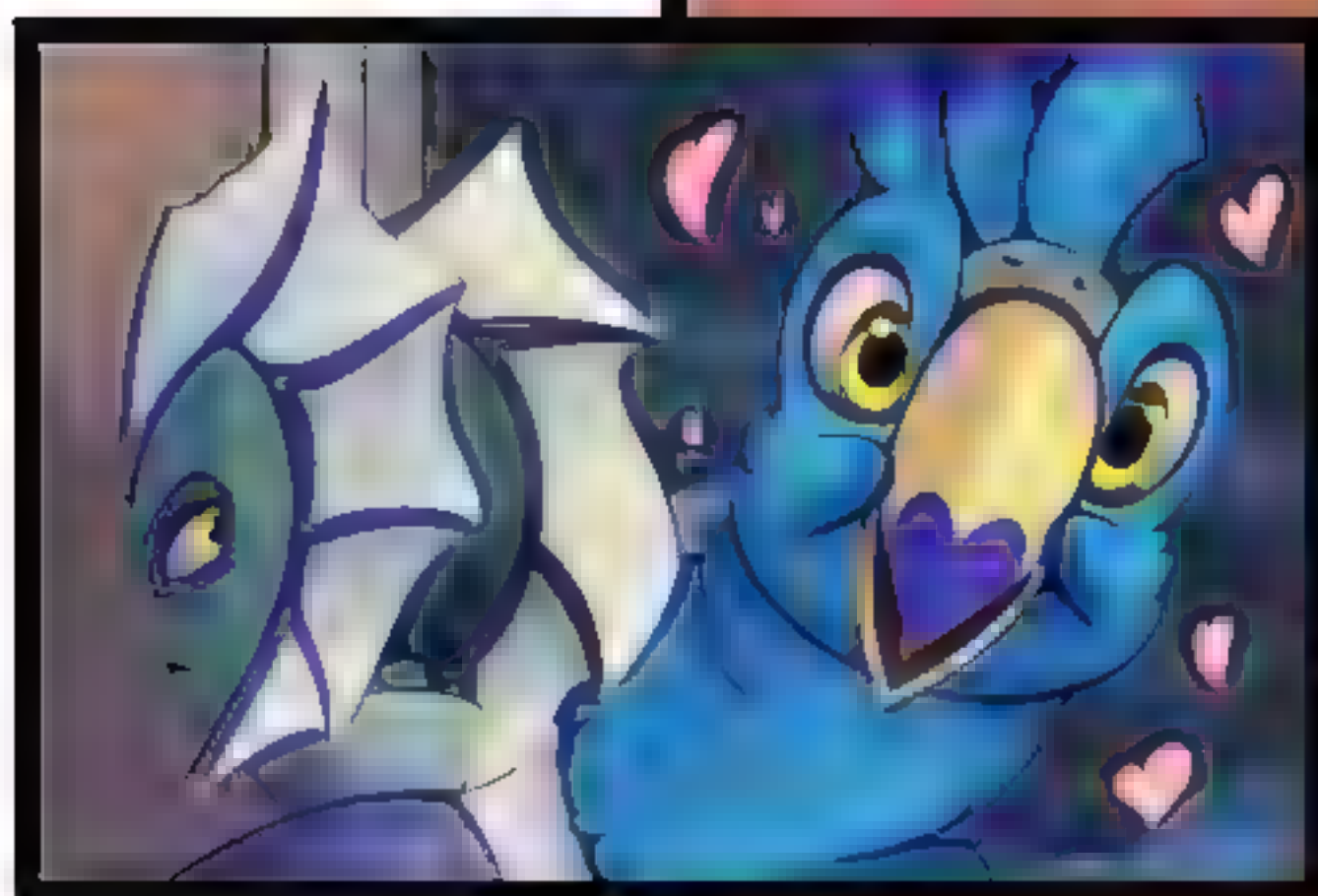
"TO MAKE SURE SHE'S SETTLED IN."

SORRY, NOT URGENT ENOUGH. MY INSTRUCTIONS WERE CLEAR--

NOW WAIT A MINUTE, WHO'S THE **PROFESSOR** HERE?



IS THAT ZHAZE'S VOICE?



I, UH, I'M... I MEAN, GOOD EVENING, MS. BILISHT! I JUST CAME TO SEE HOW--

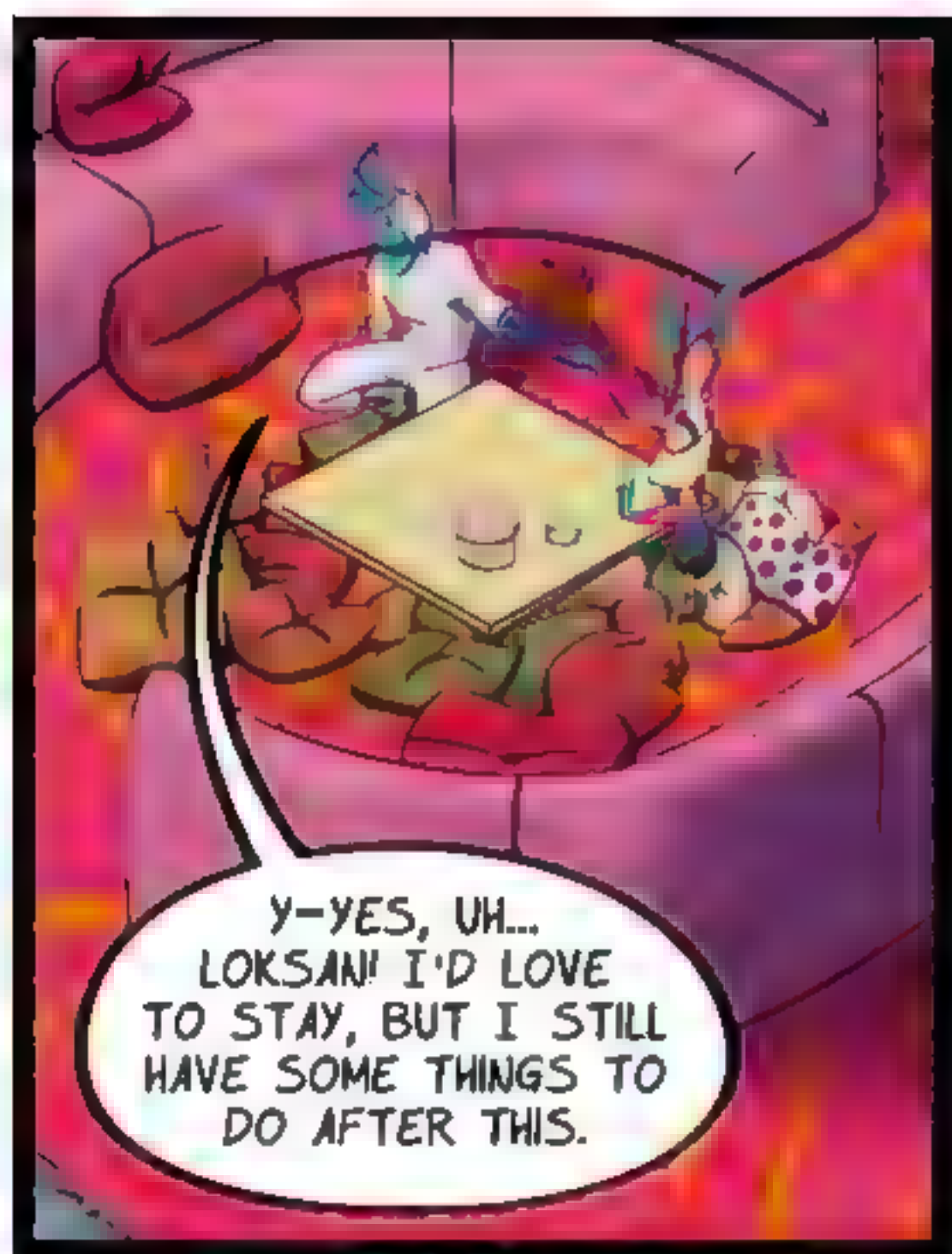
OH, YES, EVERYTHING'S BEEN GOING SWIMMINGLY.

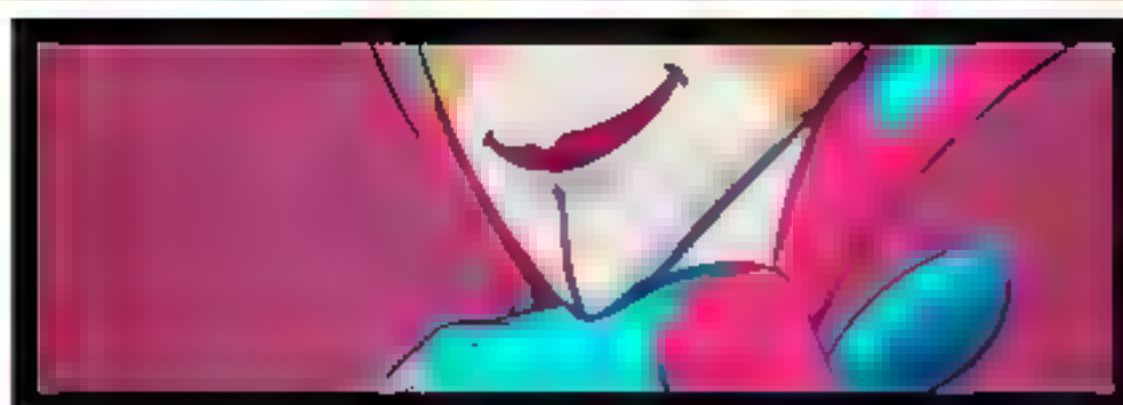
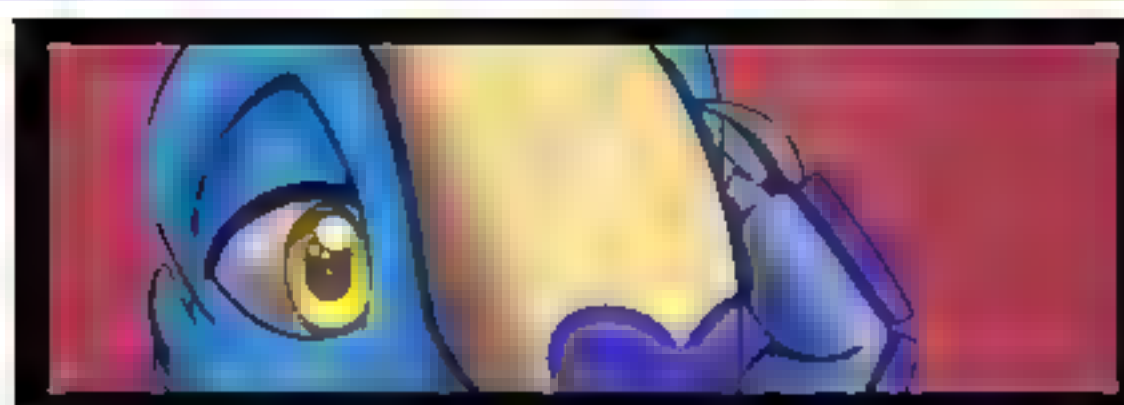
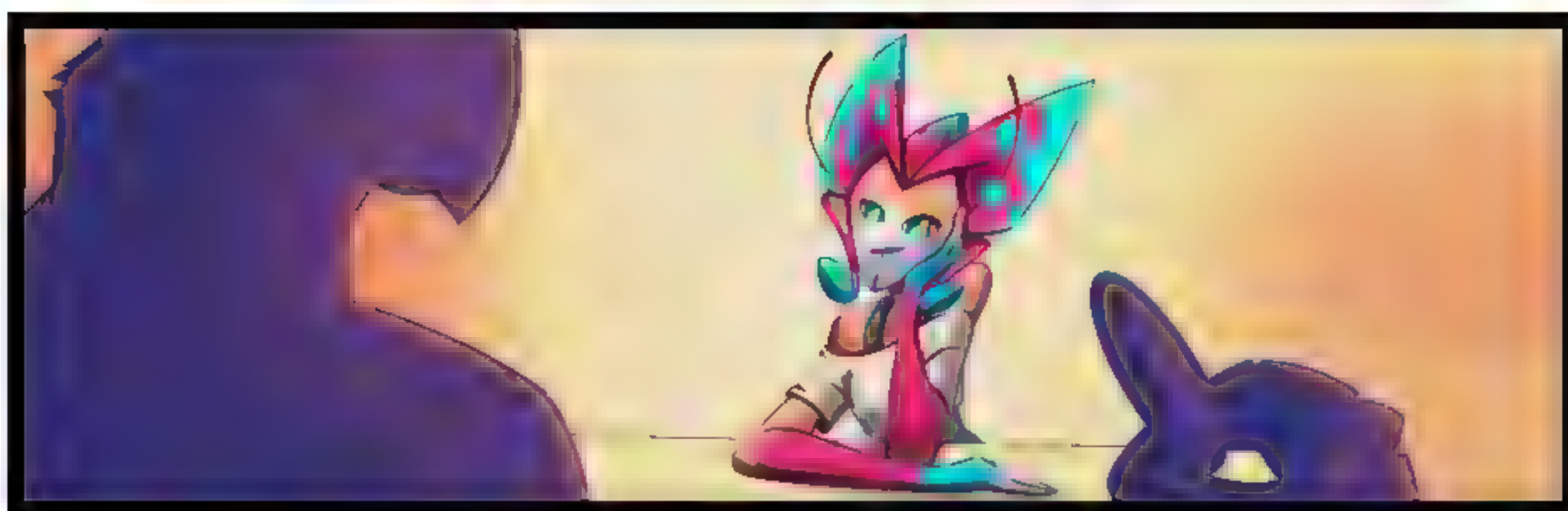
COME IN, COME **IN!**

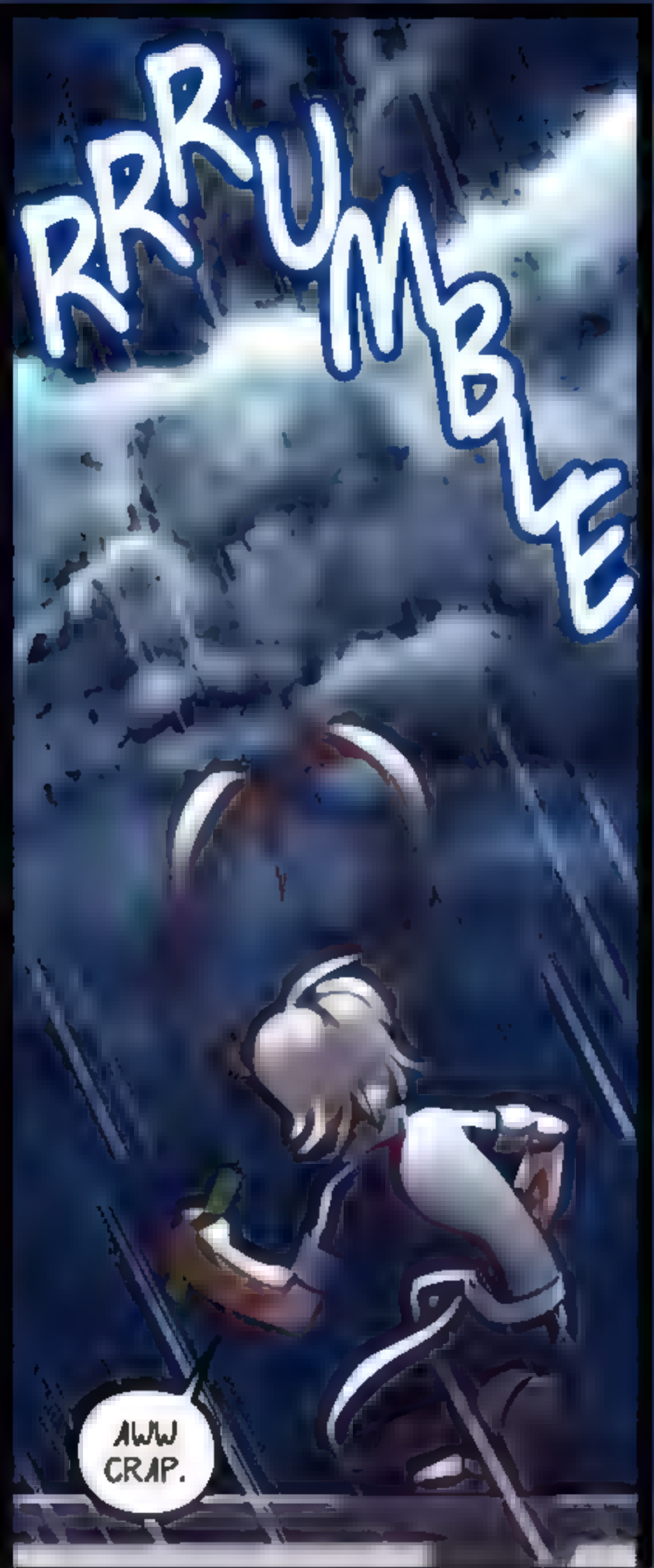
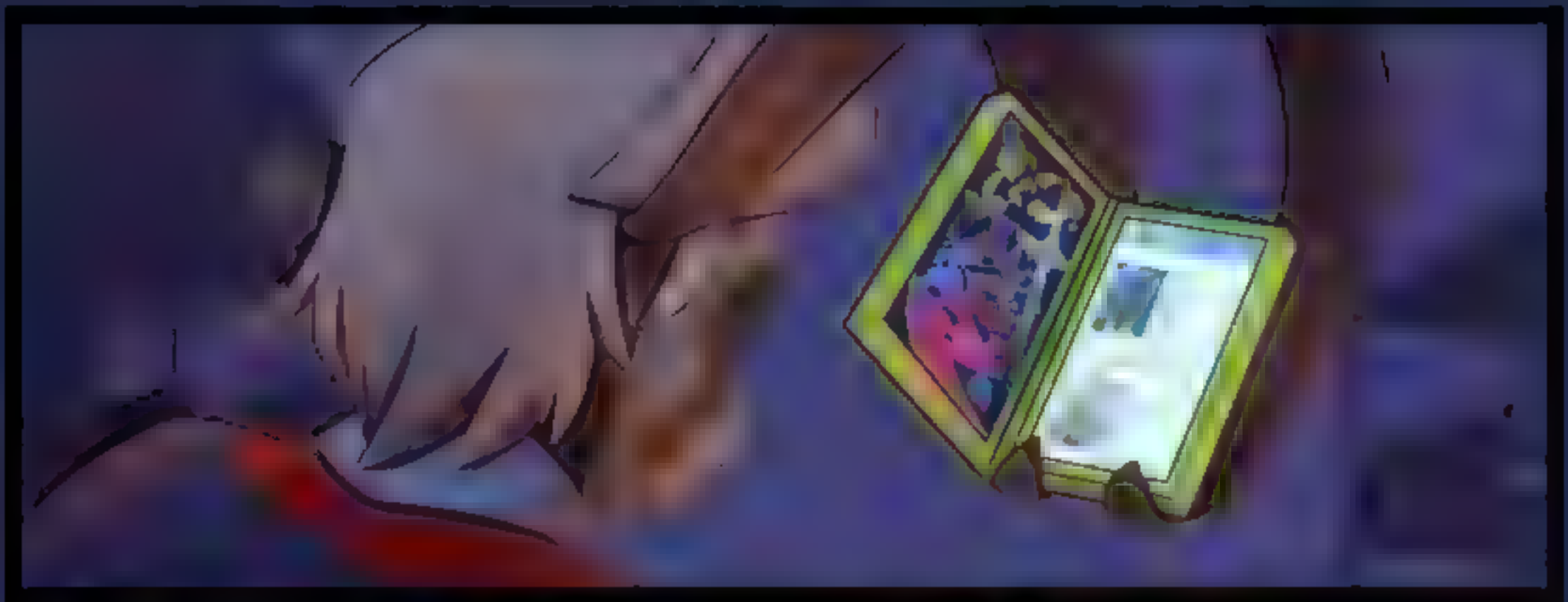
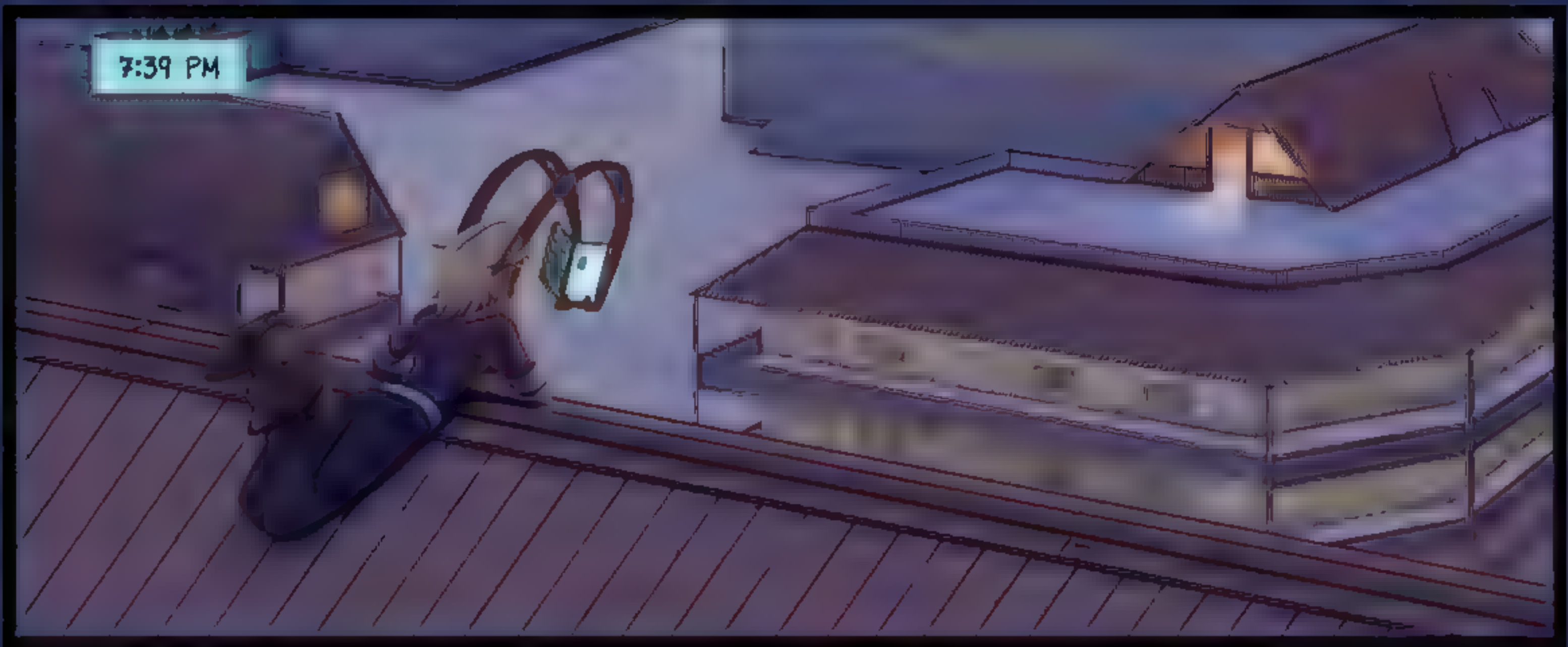


THANK YOU, I WON'T TAKE UP MUCH OF YOUR TIME--

WHY DON'T YOU SIT DOWN AND HAVE SOME TEA WITH ME?







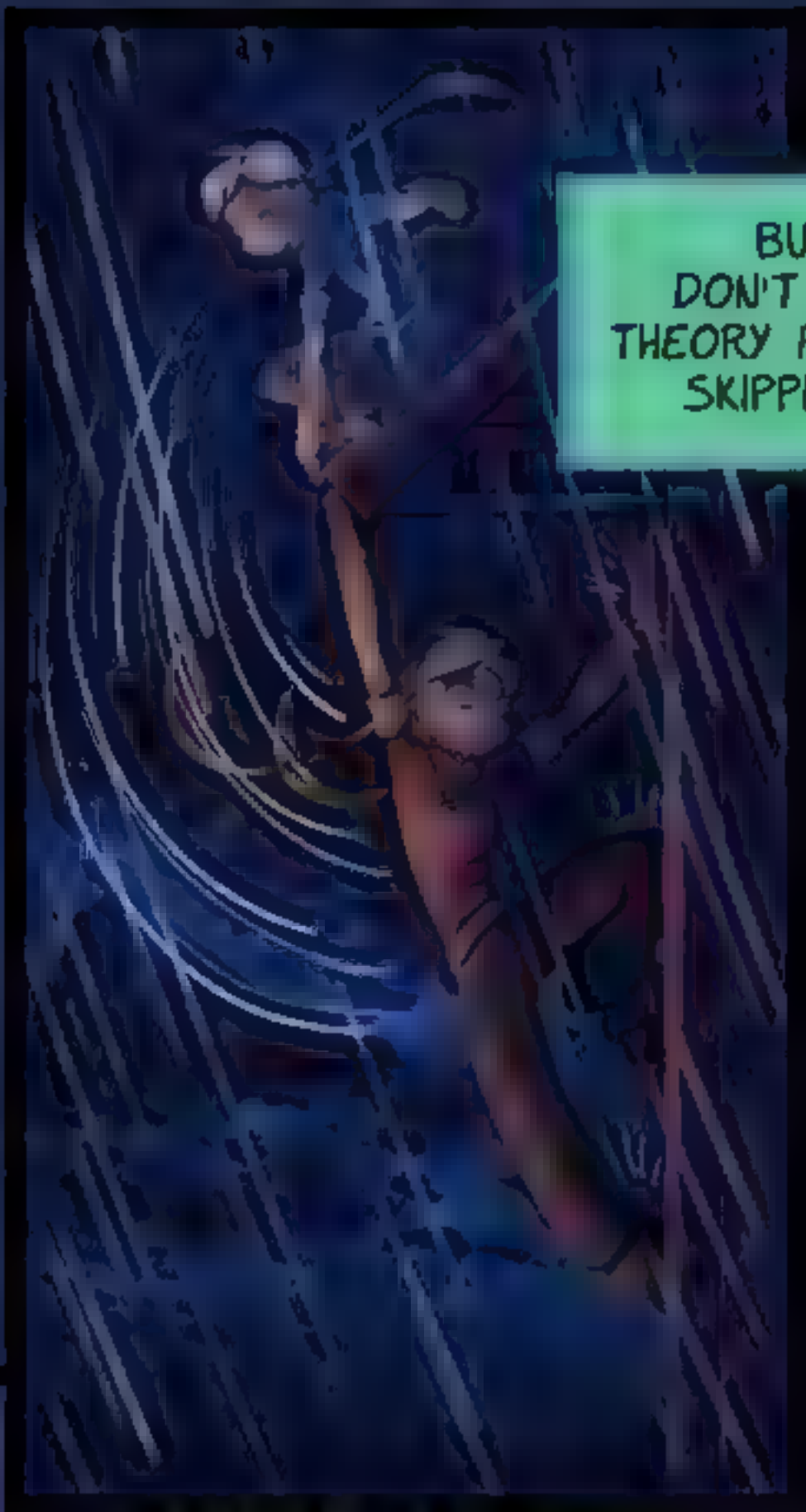


THE TIME IS:
19:40!

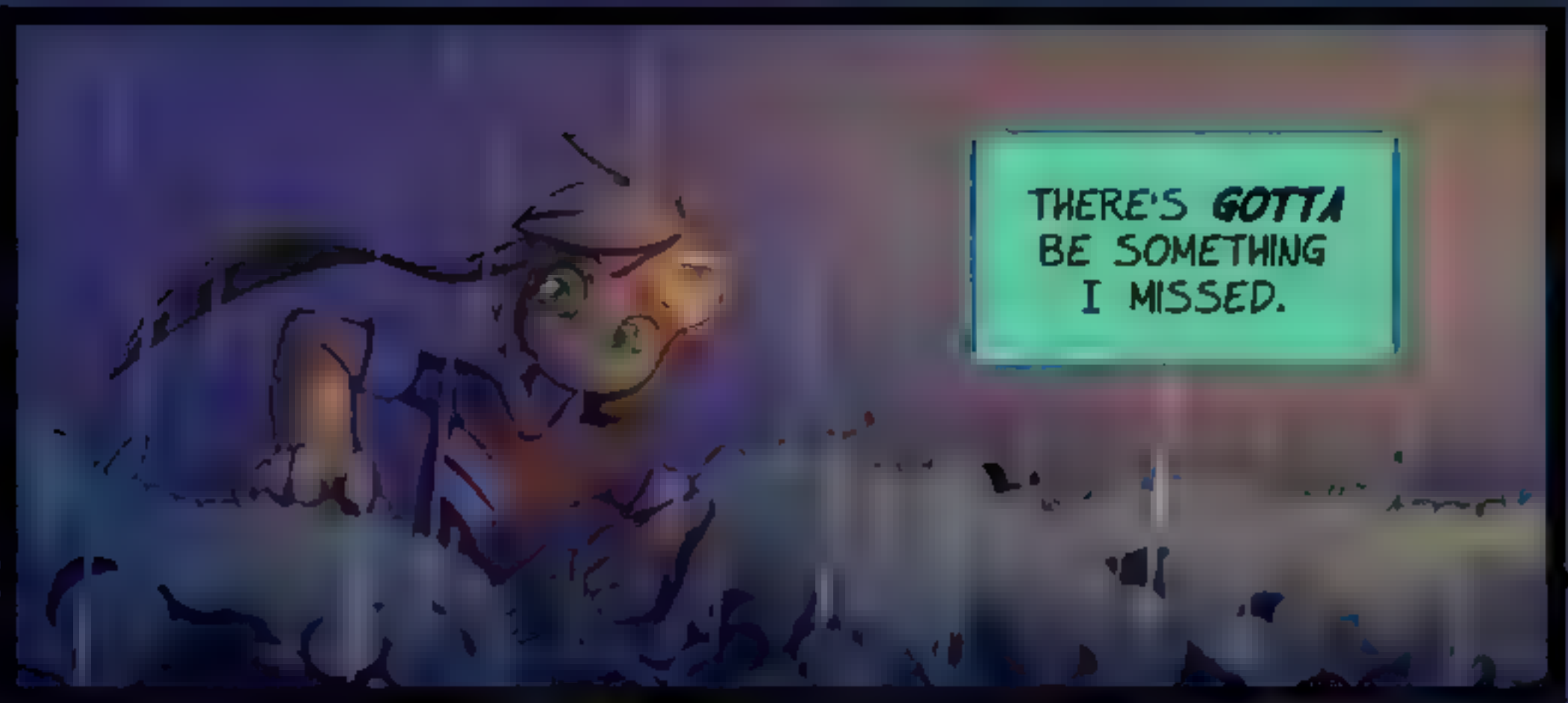
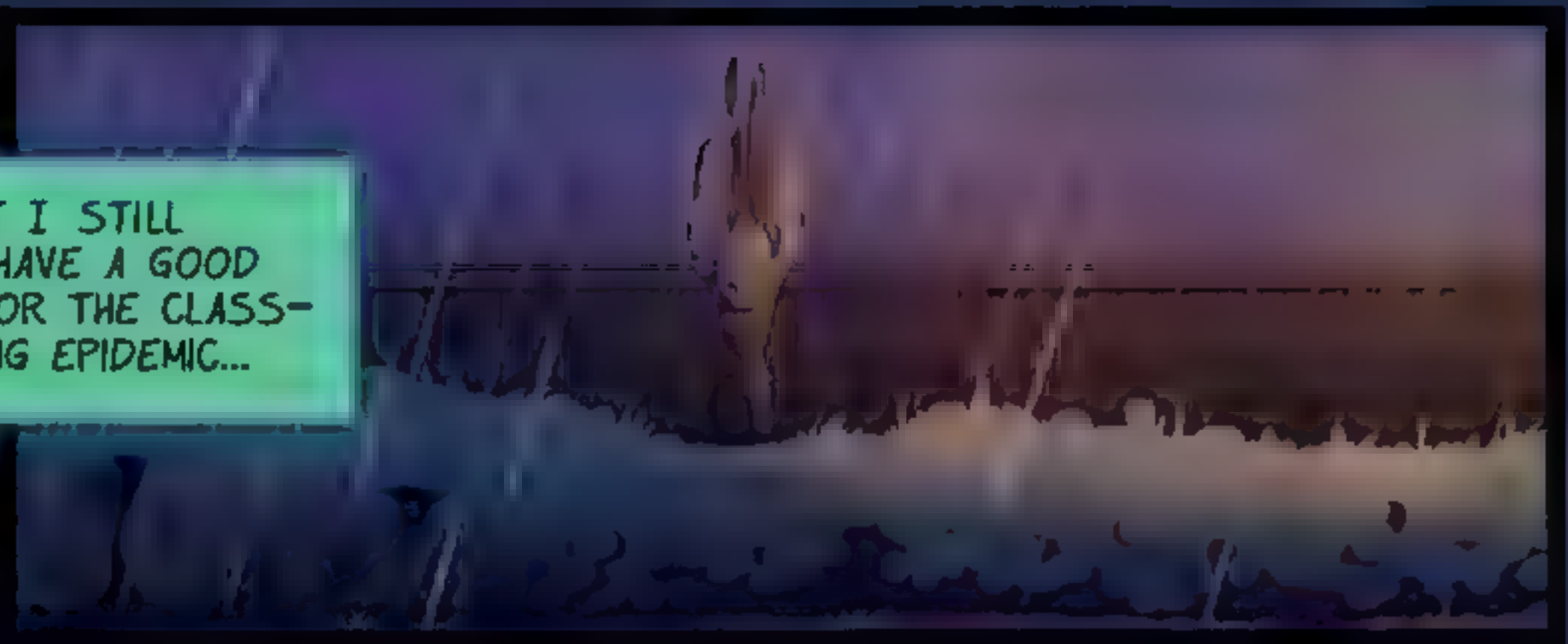


UPCOMING
APPOINTMENT:
"MEET FALLAN."

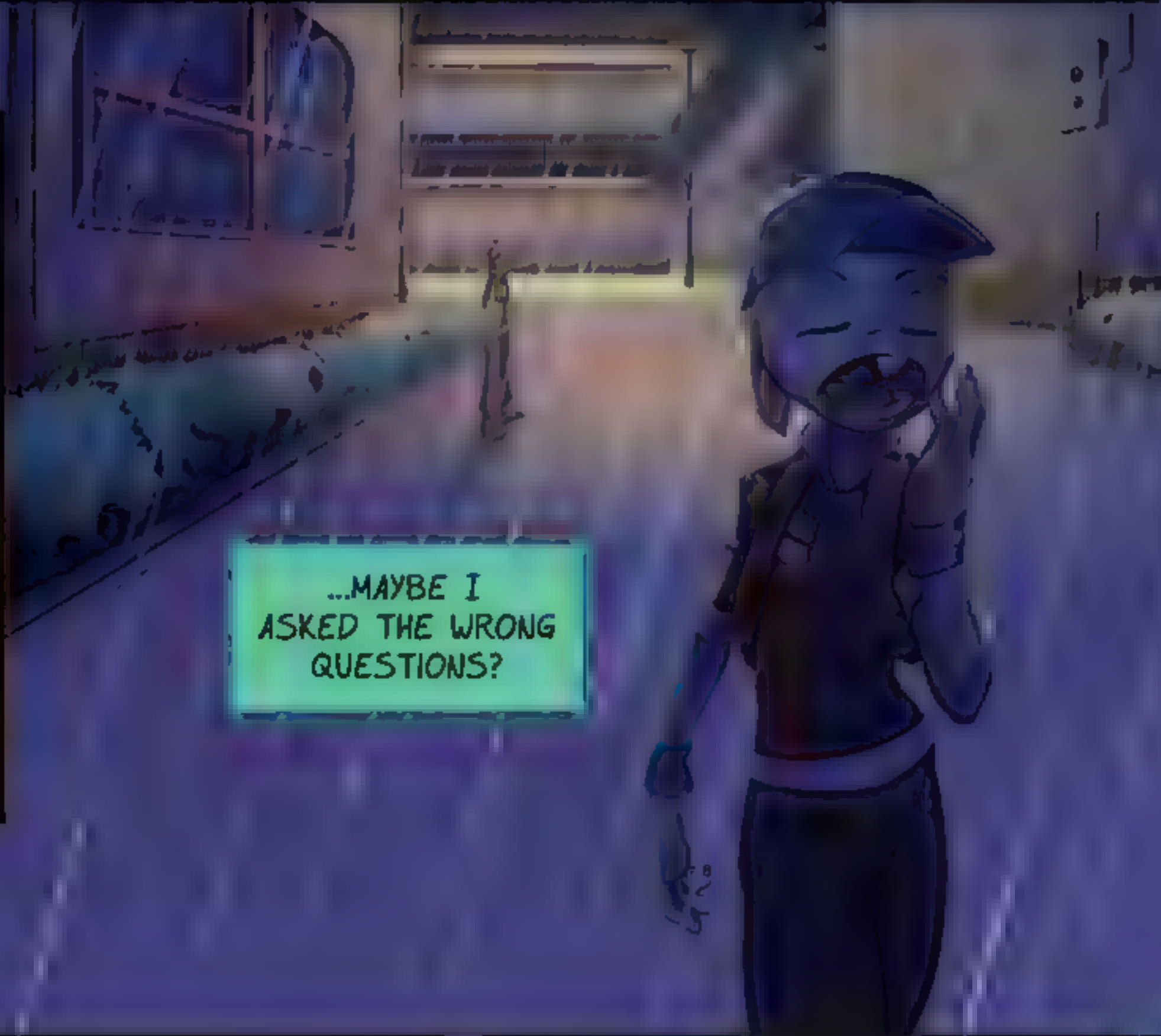
AWW,
CRAP.



BUT I STILL
DON'T HAVE A GOOD
THEORY FOR THE CLASS-
SKIPPING EPIDEMIC...



THERE'S *GOTTA*
BE SOMETHING
I MISSED.



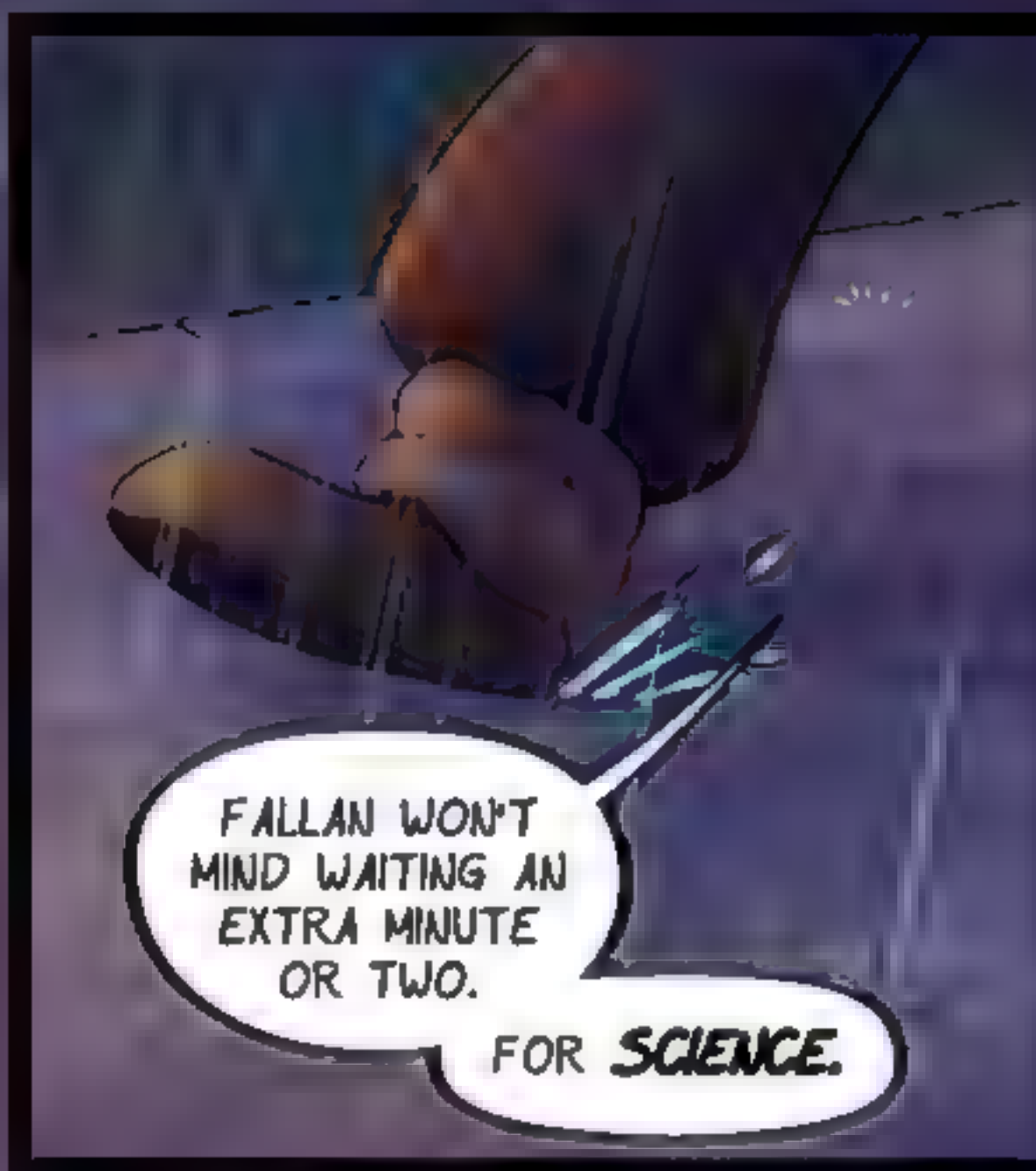
...MAYBE I
ASKED THE WRONG
QUESTIONS?



A QUICK LITTLE FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW WOULDN'T GET ANYONE IN TROUBLE, RIGHT?

AND JUST ASKING THINGS DOESN'T HURT ANYBODY, RIGHT?

I'D MISS THE TRAM... BUT IF I REALLY BOOK IT, I'LL MAKE UP MOST OF THAT TIME.



FALLAN WON'T MIND WAITING AN EXTRA MINUTE OR TWO.

FOR **SCIENCE**.



YO, WAIT UP A SEC--

EEEE!

OH, IT'S YOU AGAIN.



HEY, YEAH, UH... LISTEN. ABOUT OUR LITTLE CONVERSATION EARLIER. I JUST WANTED TO ASK--



DUDE, I SAID
LIKE THREE TIMES,
I DON'T REMEMBER.

I STAYED UP ALL
NIGHT PLAYING VIDEO GAMES,
AND THIS MORNING THERE WAS
A BORING GEOMETRY LESSON.
I *FELL ASLEEP*.



I KNOW, I
KNOW, JUST--

LOOK, IT'S
REALLY IMPORTANT.
WAS THERE REALLY
NOTHING WEIRD ABOUT
THAT CLASS?

NOT EVEN A
TINY BIT OFF?



LISTEN.

LIKE I SAID, THE
CLASS WAS...



...WAS,
UH...



THE CLASS
WAS WHAT?

IT WASN'T...

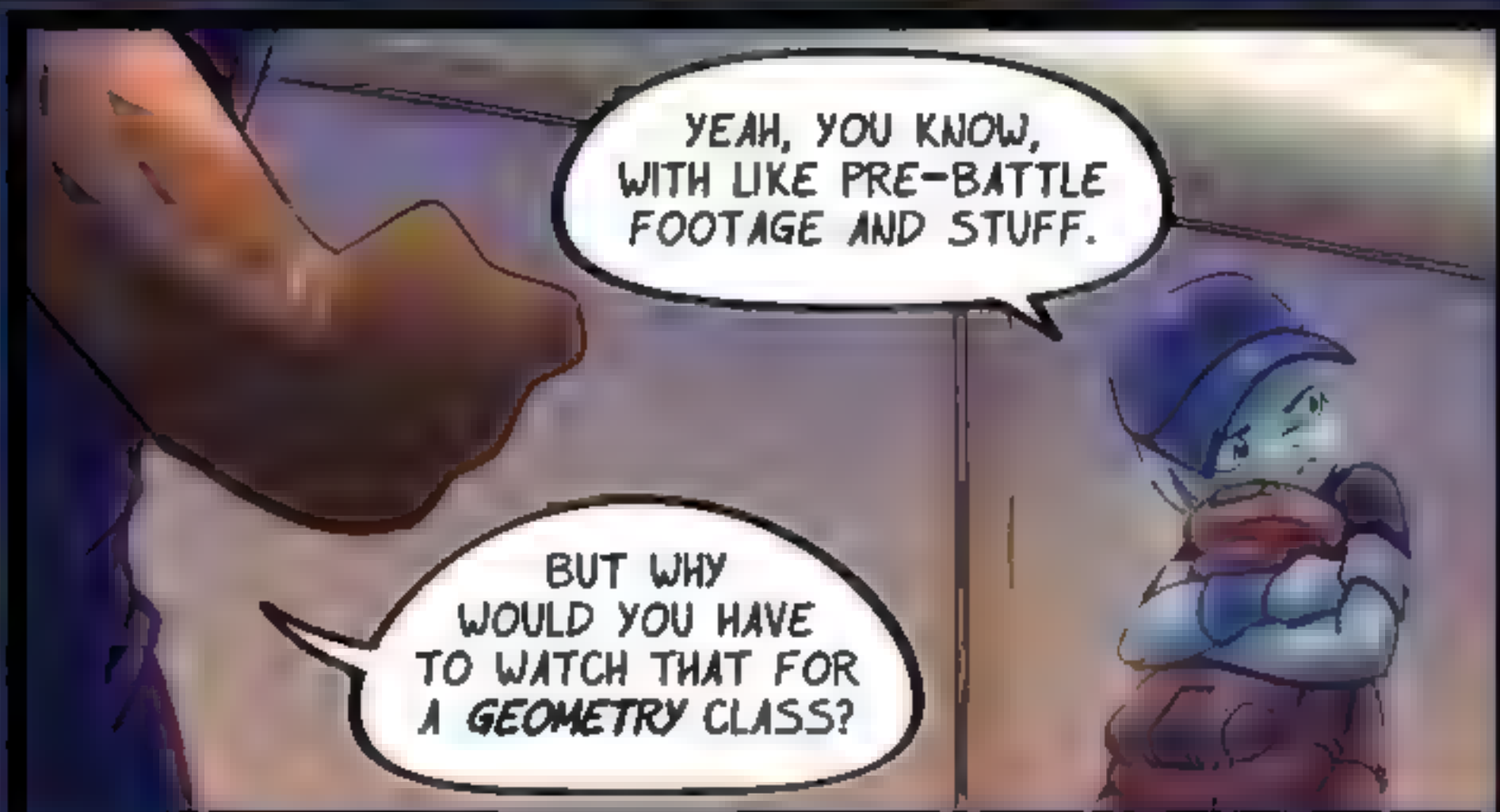
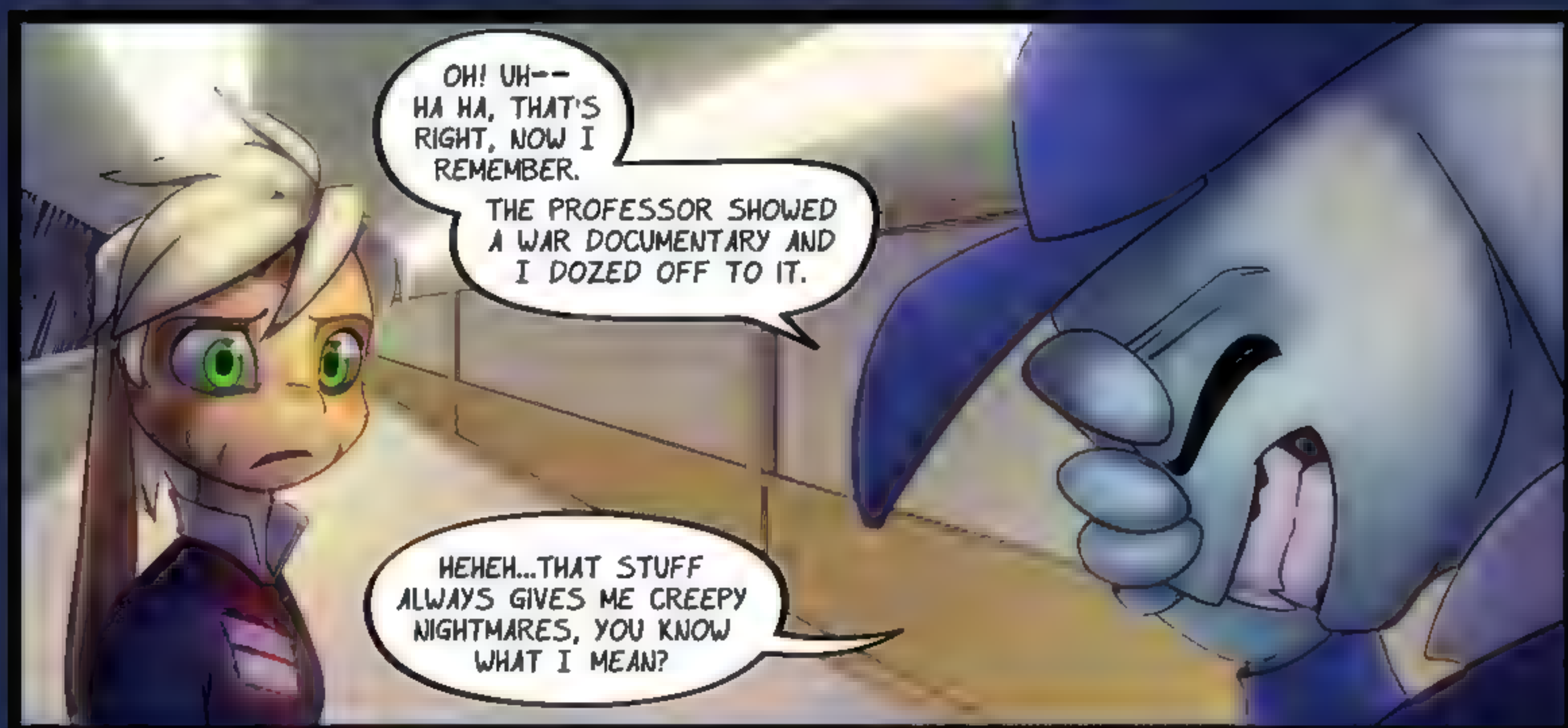
...WASN'T ABOUT
GEOMETRY?



THERE WAS A
WINDOW. AND BEHIND
IT... THEY LOOKED
LIKE SOLDIERS.

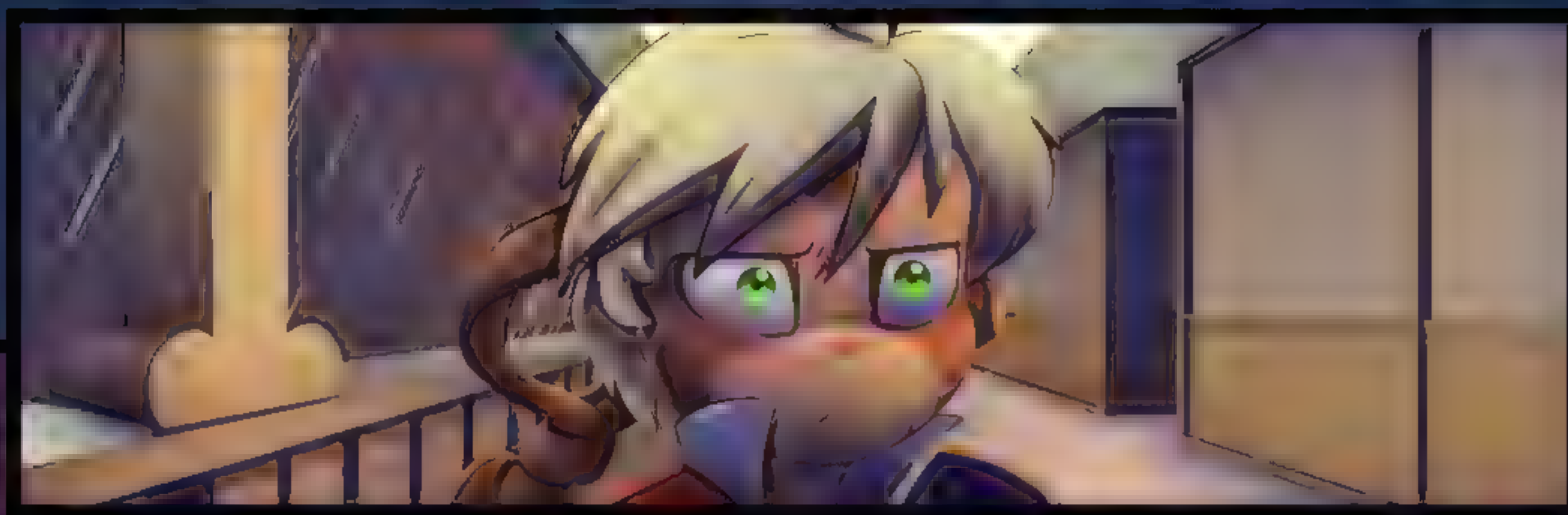
PEOPLE IN UNIFORMS.
MASKED GUYS, DECKED OUT
IN COMBAT GEAR.

AND SOME DUDE
WAS TALKING TO US--
LIKE A MOVIE
VOICE-OVER.





YUUEAH, GO.
THANKS FOR
THE HELP.



SHE'S A
RHO-DA AGNA.

THEY'RE SUPPOSED
TO BE PEACEKEEPERS --
BUT THERE'S NOTHING
PEACEFUL ABOUT WHAT
THEY DO.



IF THEY SHOW
UP AT YOUR HOUSE,
THE ONLY PEOPLE GETTING
OUT ARE THE ONES WHO
LEAVE IN **BODY BAGS.**



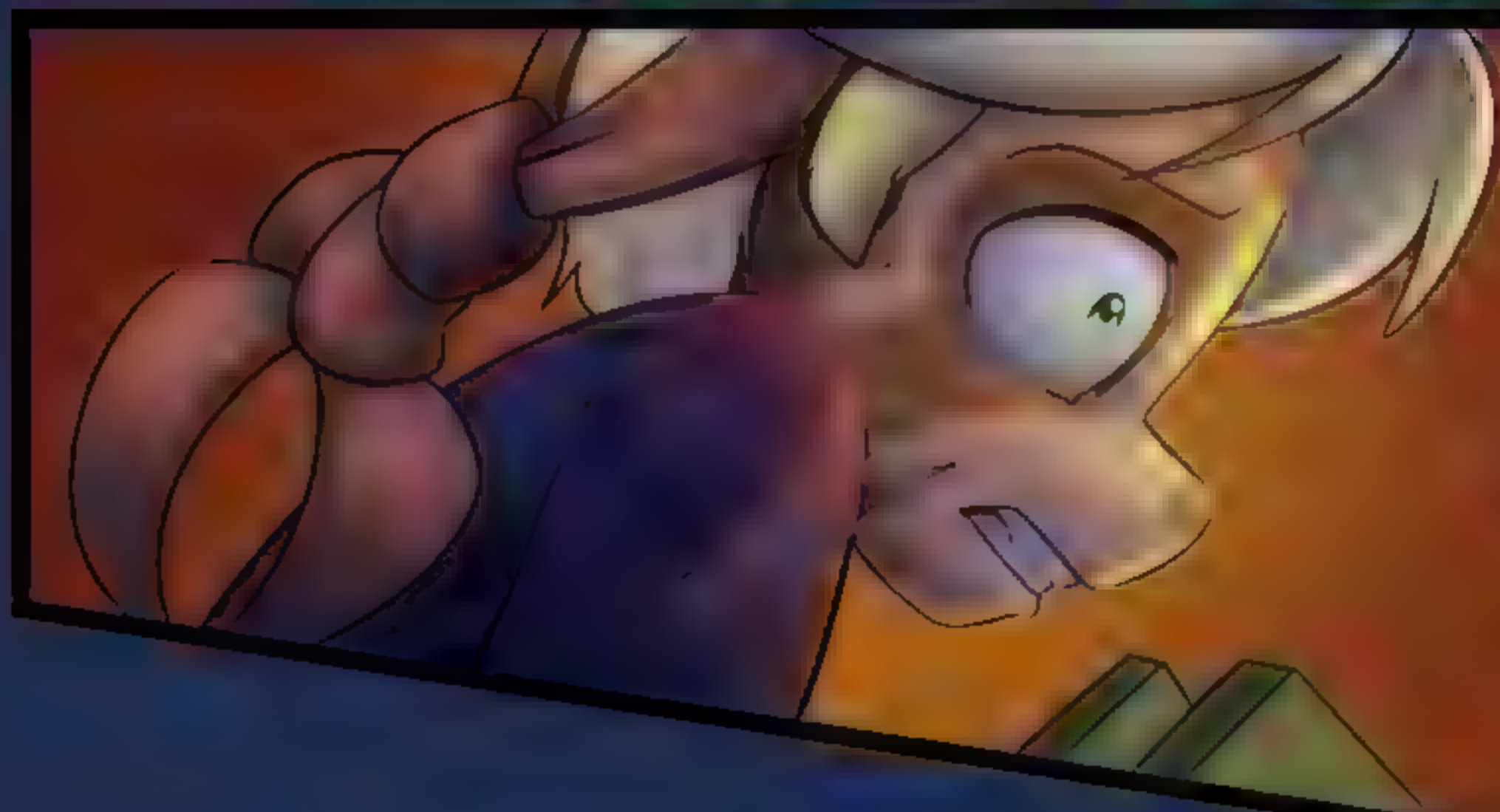
...BUT THAT
CAN'T BE WHAT'S
HAPPENING.

THAT'S
STUPID.

SLOW DOWN
KHEIL, DON'T
JUMP TO ANY DUMB
CONCLUSIONS.

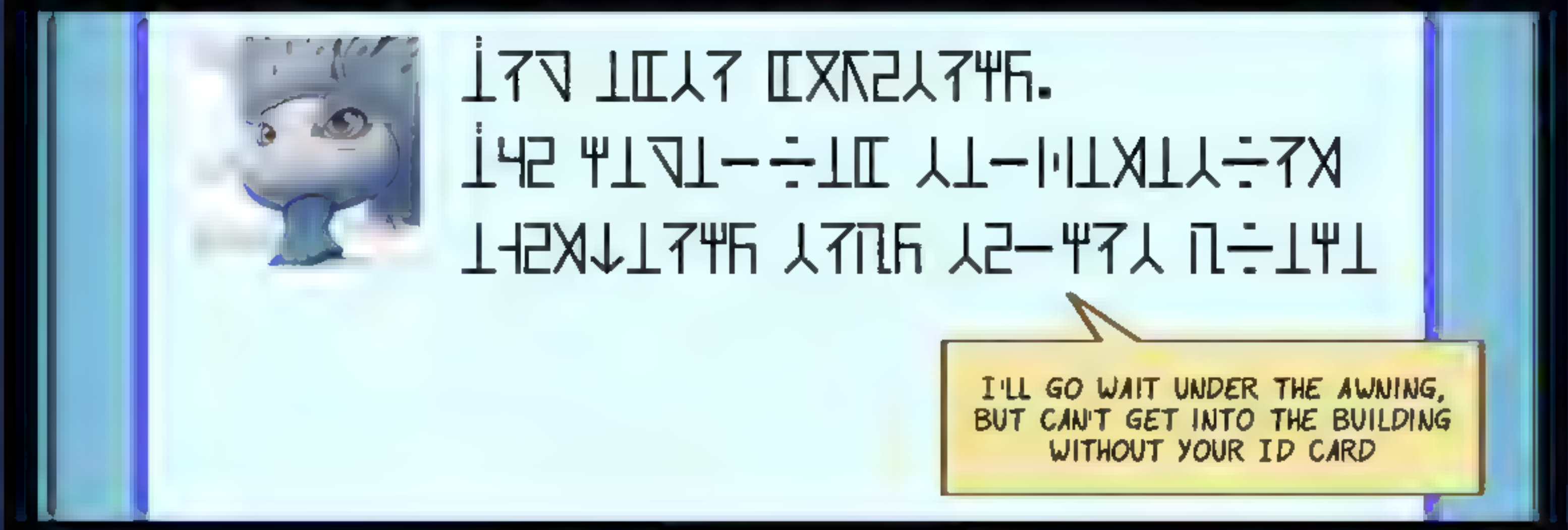
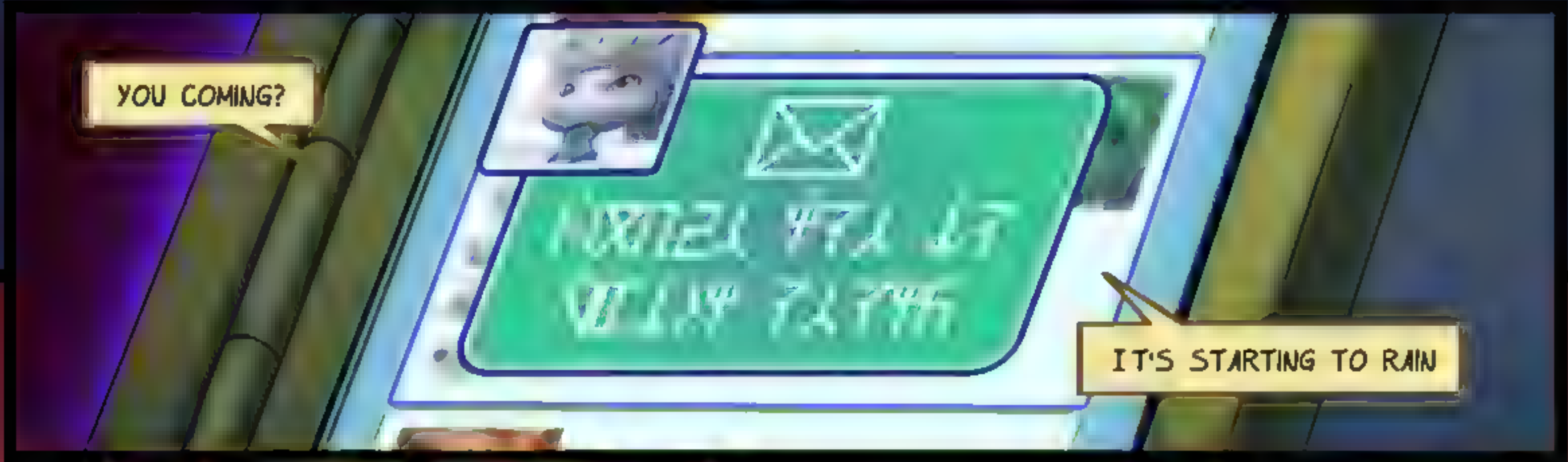


YOU NEED A
SECOND OPINION --
SOMEONE WHO CAN
LOOK AT EVERYTHING
AND TELL IF YOU'RE
CRAZY OR NOT.



CRAP CRAP
CRAP, THIS IS
SO WEIRD--

WHY DOES AL HAVE TO
BE BUSY **BABYSITTING** AT
A TIME LIKE THIS?



ON MY WAY! :D



PLEASE, FALLAN,
DON'T LET ME DO
ANYTHING WEIRD
OR STUPID.



...AND OUR TRACKERS REPORT THAT THE *DREILAK* INFESTATION IN THIS QUADRANT HAS BEEN CLEARED OUT.

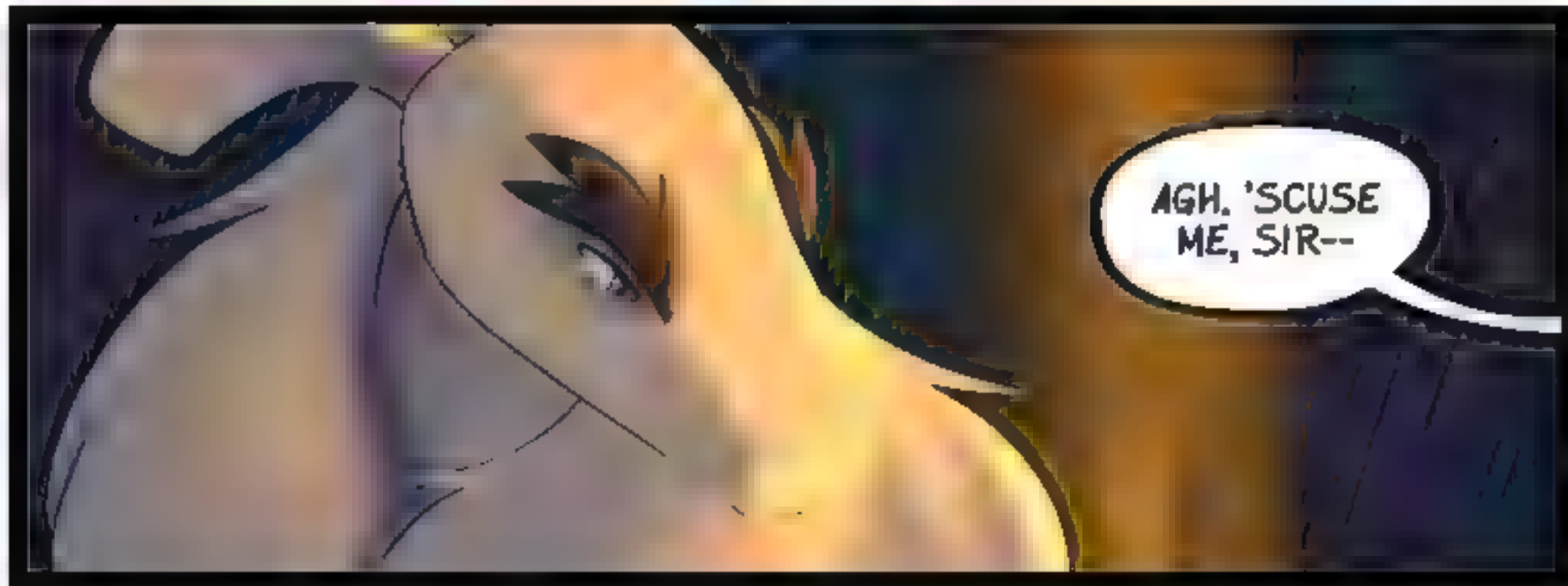


TOWER SEVEN JUST SUBMITTED THE ALL CLEAR ON THEIR END, SO IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S NOTHING ELSE--

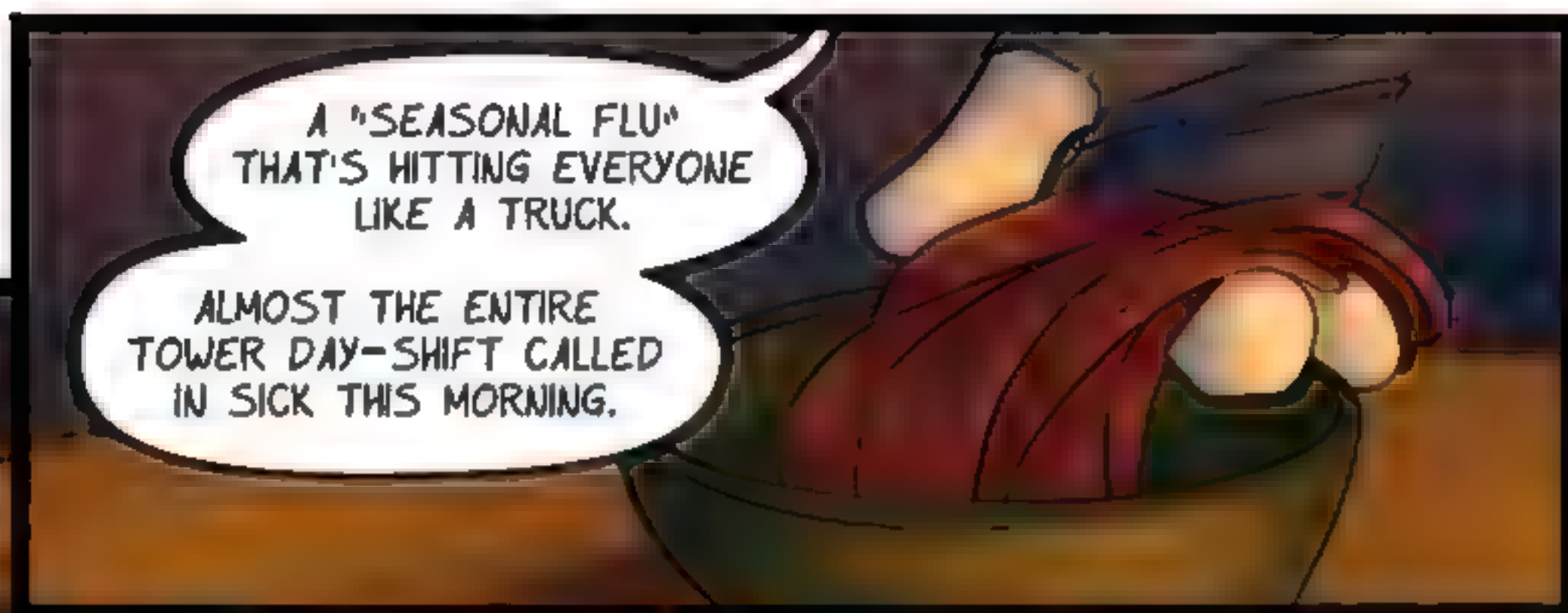


COUGH
HACK

WHEEZE



AGH, 'SCUSE ME, SIR--





YES, SIR!

THANK
YOU, SIR.



OZI! THERE YOU
ARE, HAVEN'T SEEN
YOU COME AROUND
IN A WHILE.

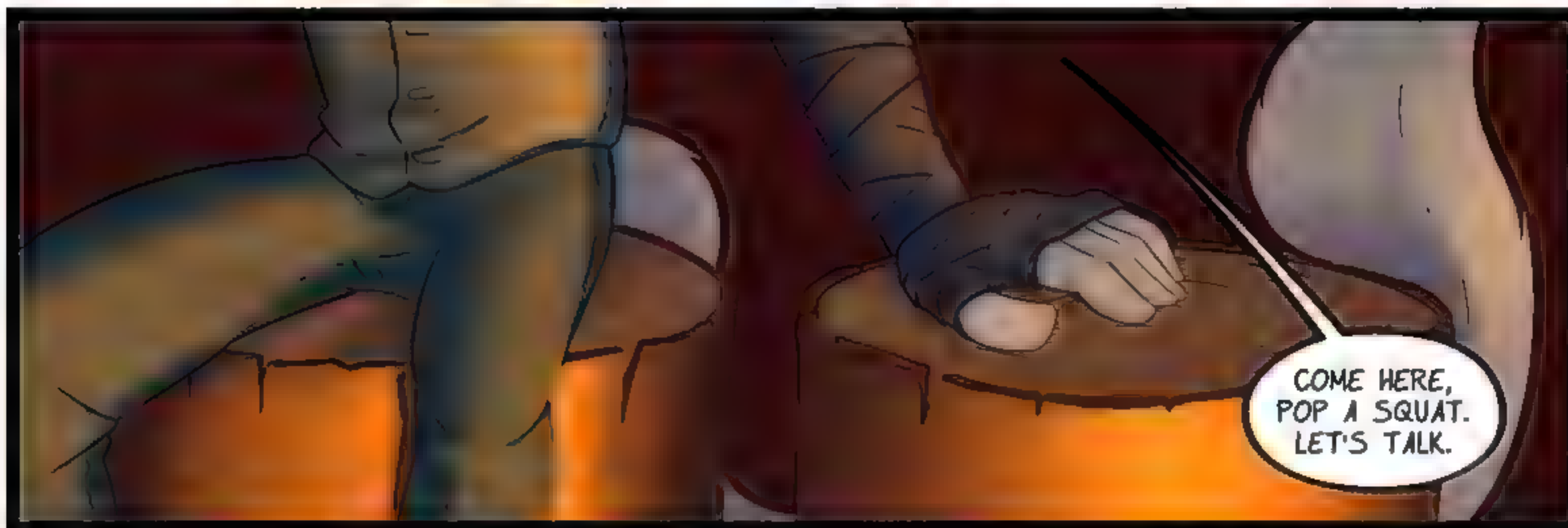
HI... SORRY.
GOOD TO SEE
YOU TOO.



HAD A FEELING
YOU'D SHOW
UP TODAY.



I-- WAIT,
YOU DID?



COME HERE,
POP A SQUAT.
LET'S TALK.



JERKY?

I... COULDN'T
STOMACH IT.



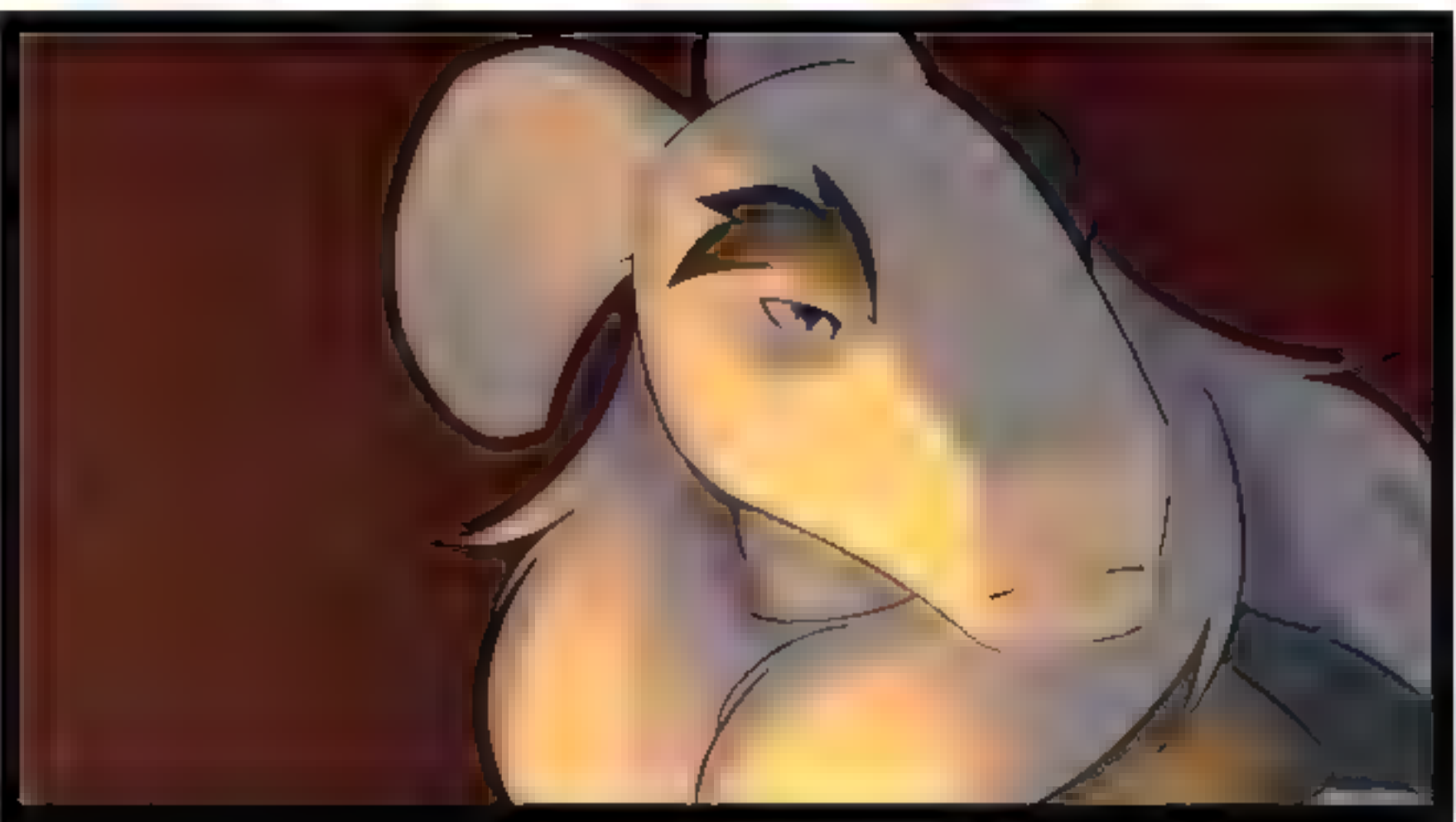
WHAT?

BLASPHEMY.
MEAT CURES
EVERYTHING!

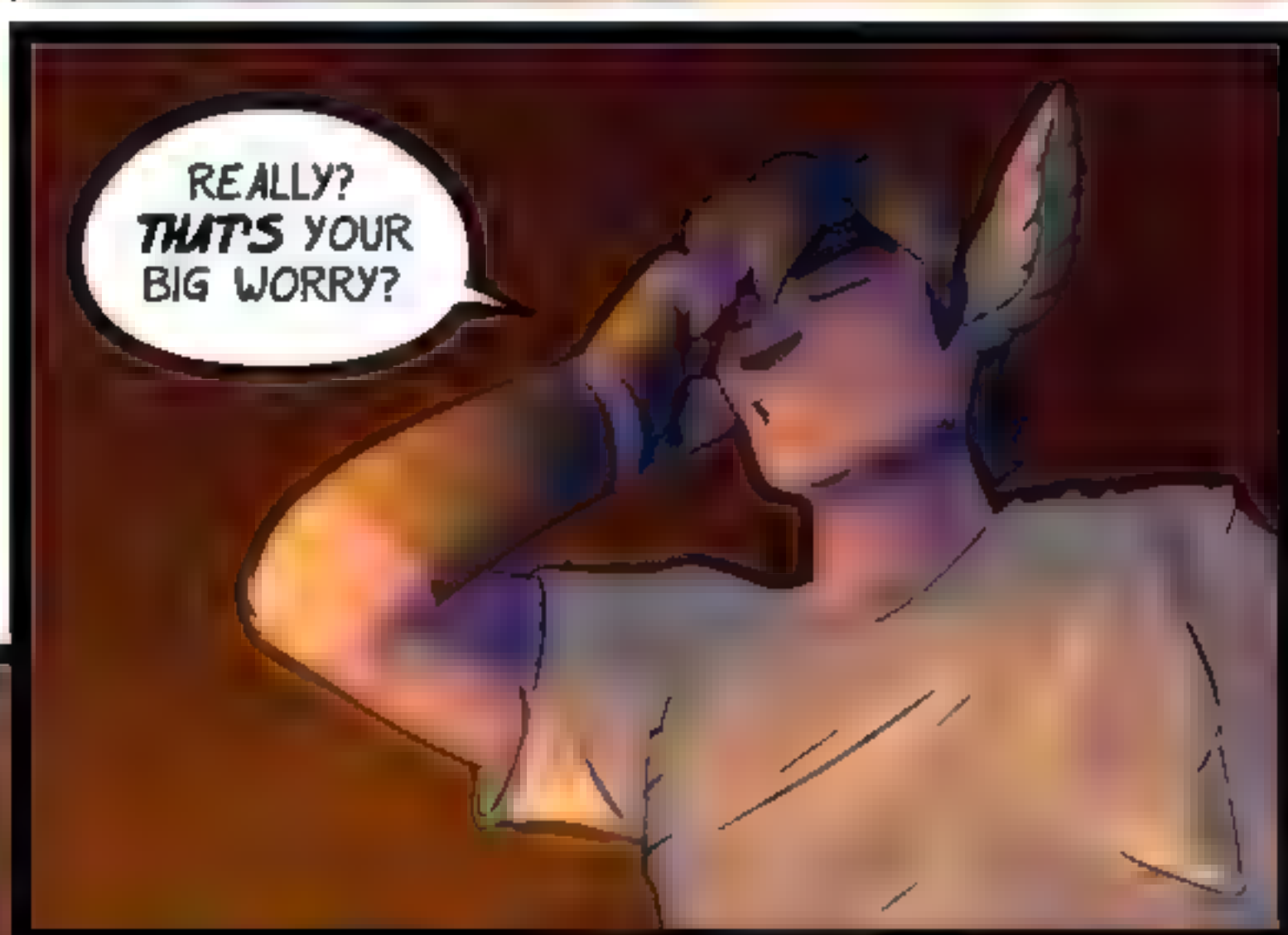


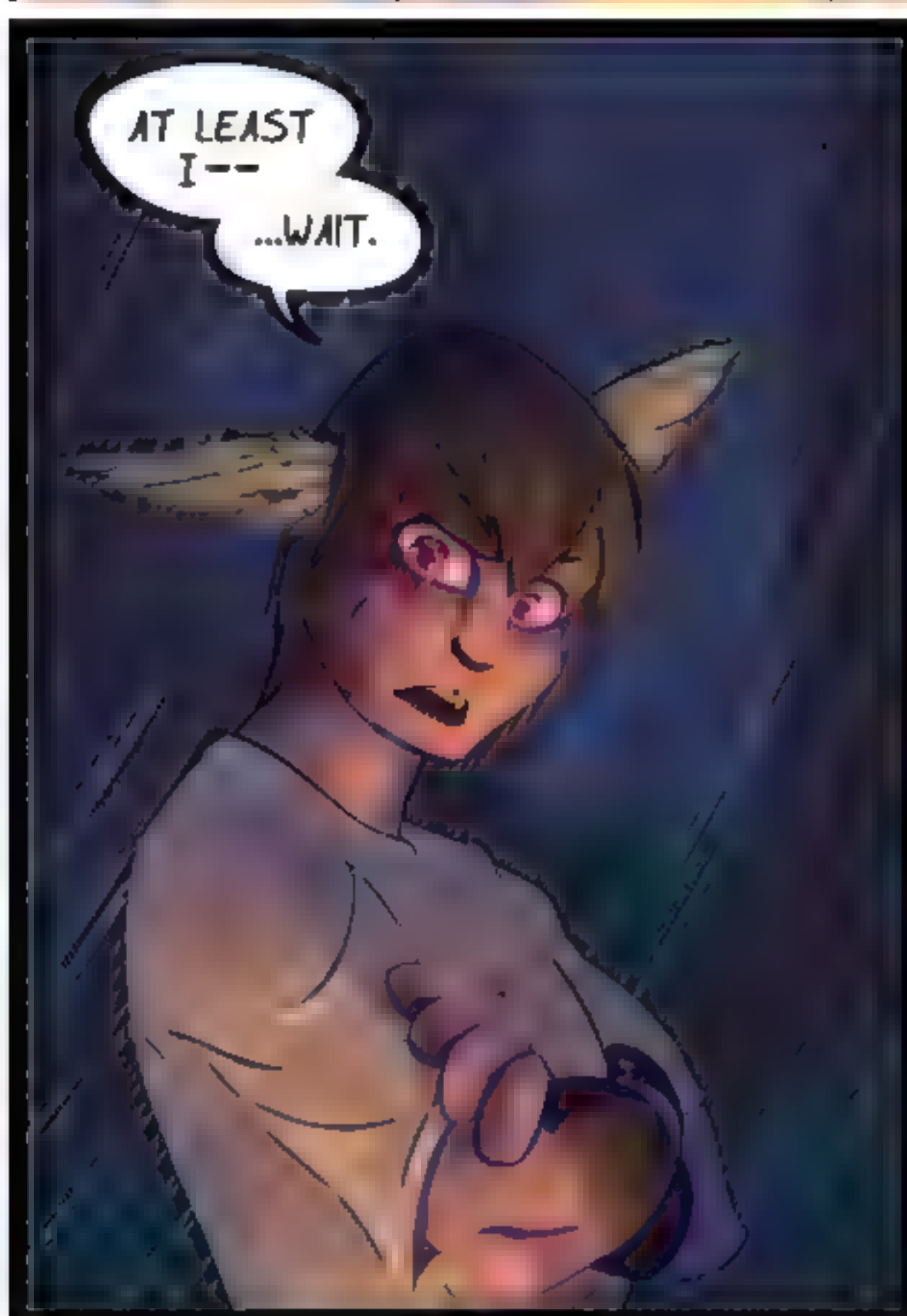
SORRY,
I JUST...

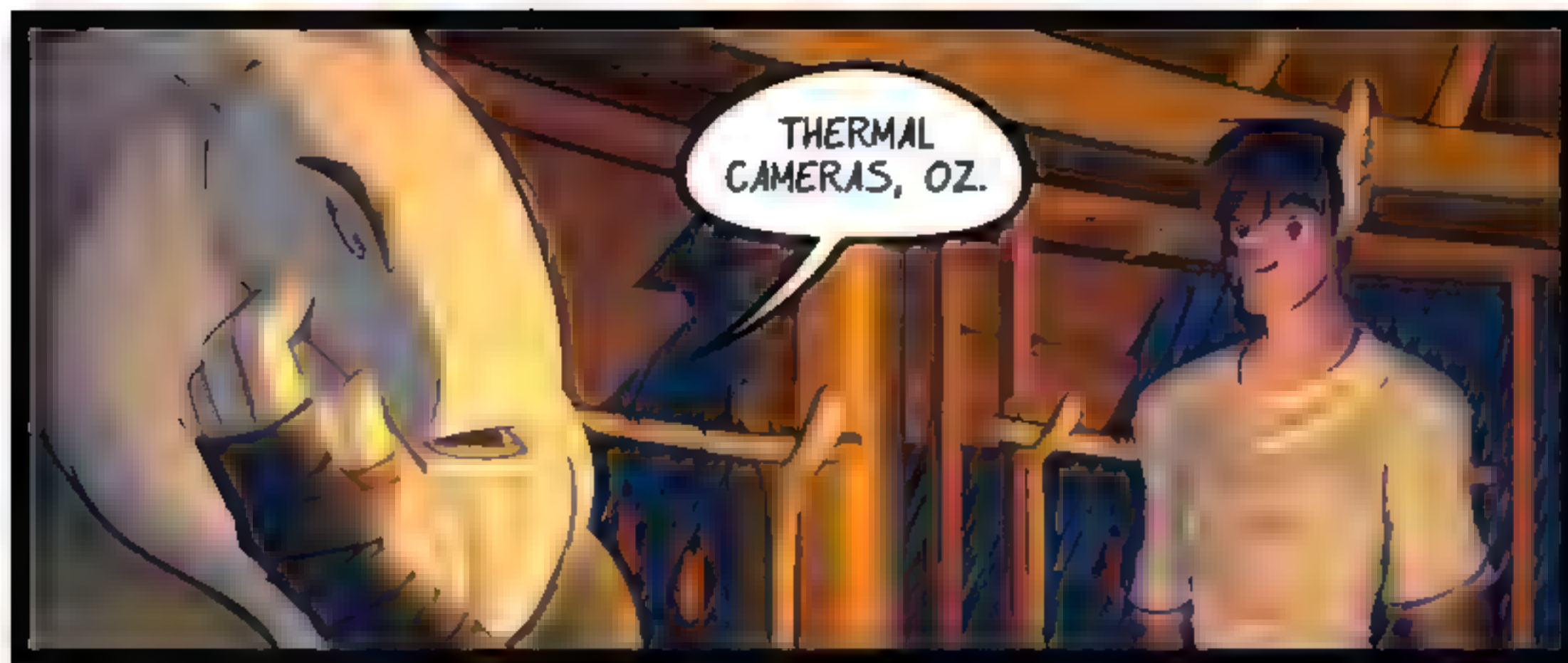
IT'S THOTZEV
ZHTATZGHA.
SHE'S HERE.



I'M SURPRISED
YOU RECOGNIZE HER.







THERMAL
CAMERAS, OZ.

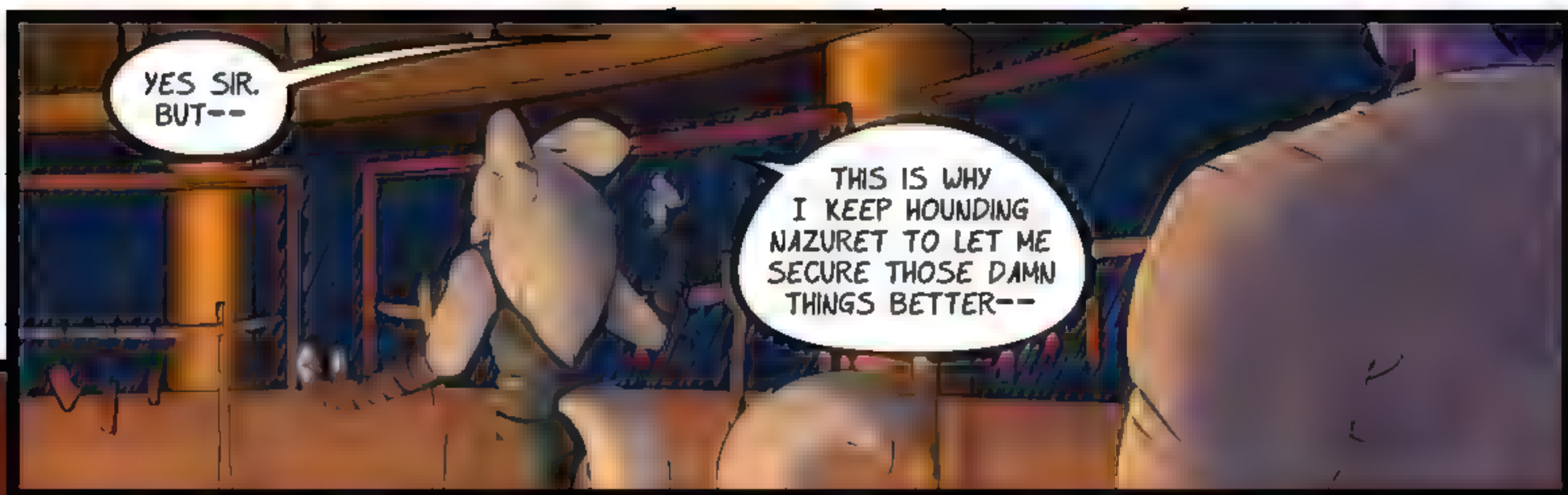


I'M VERY,
VERY GLAD YOU
HAD THE SENSE TO
PUT IT BACK.

OTHERWISE... WELL,
THERE WERE OFFICERS
IN POSITION. WOULD'VE
ENDED BADLY.



DON'T **EVER**
DO THAT AGAIN,
UNDERSTAND?



YES SIR.
BUT--

THIS IS WHY
I KEEP HOUNDING
NAZURET TO LET ME
SECURE THOSE DAMN
THINGS BETTER--

Z, PLEASE!

YEAH, I'M YELLING
AND CONFRONTING YOU,
BUT DO **NOT** CHANGE THE
SUBJECT JUST 'CAUSE
YOU DON'T WANT TO
DEAL WITH IT!



RIGHT.
SORRY.



EVERYONE'S BEEN
DODGING ME ALL DAY.
I THOUGHT OF ALL PEOPLE,
YOU WOULD...

I THOUGHT
YOU'D...



I GET IT,
KIDDO. REALLY.

BUT IF YOU
REALLY WANT AN
EXPLANATION,
IT'S...

WELL, YOU CAN'T
GET THE FULL THING
FROM ME, 'CAUSE THERE'S
THINGS EVEN I DON'T
HAVE THE CLEARANCE
TO KNOW.



...AND YOU'VE
ALWAYS TOLD ME
YOU DON'T REMEMBER
THAT NIGHT.



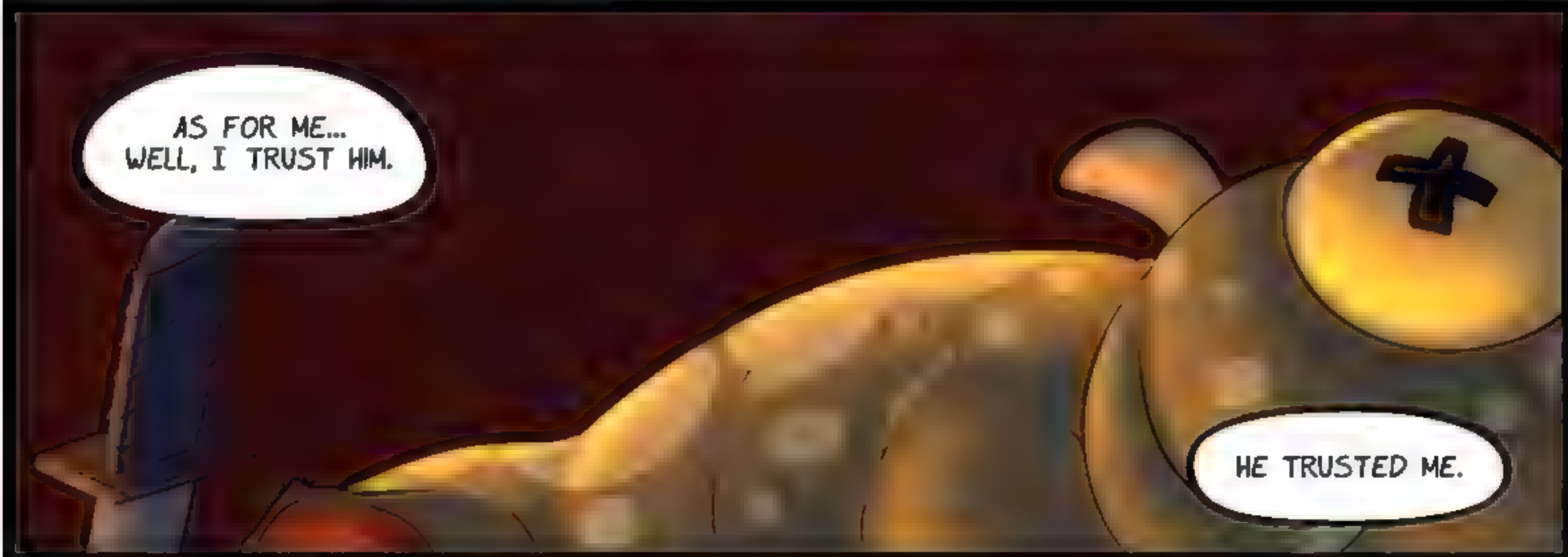
PLOT TWIST,
I *DO* REMEMBER.
JUST NEVER WANTED
TO TALK ABOUT IT.



...AH.

I WISH I COULD
TELL YOU WHY HE
HIRED HER, KID.
BUT IT'S ABOVE
MY PAY GRADE.

I WAS NECK-DEEP IN
HER BACKGROUND CHECKS AND
SHE'S AS SQUEAKY CLEAN AS
THEY GET, BUT I DON'T
KNOW WHY NAZURET
WANTS HER.



AS FOR ME...
WELL, I TRUST HIM.

HE TRUSTED ME.

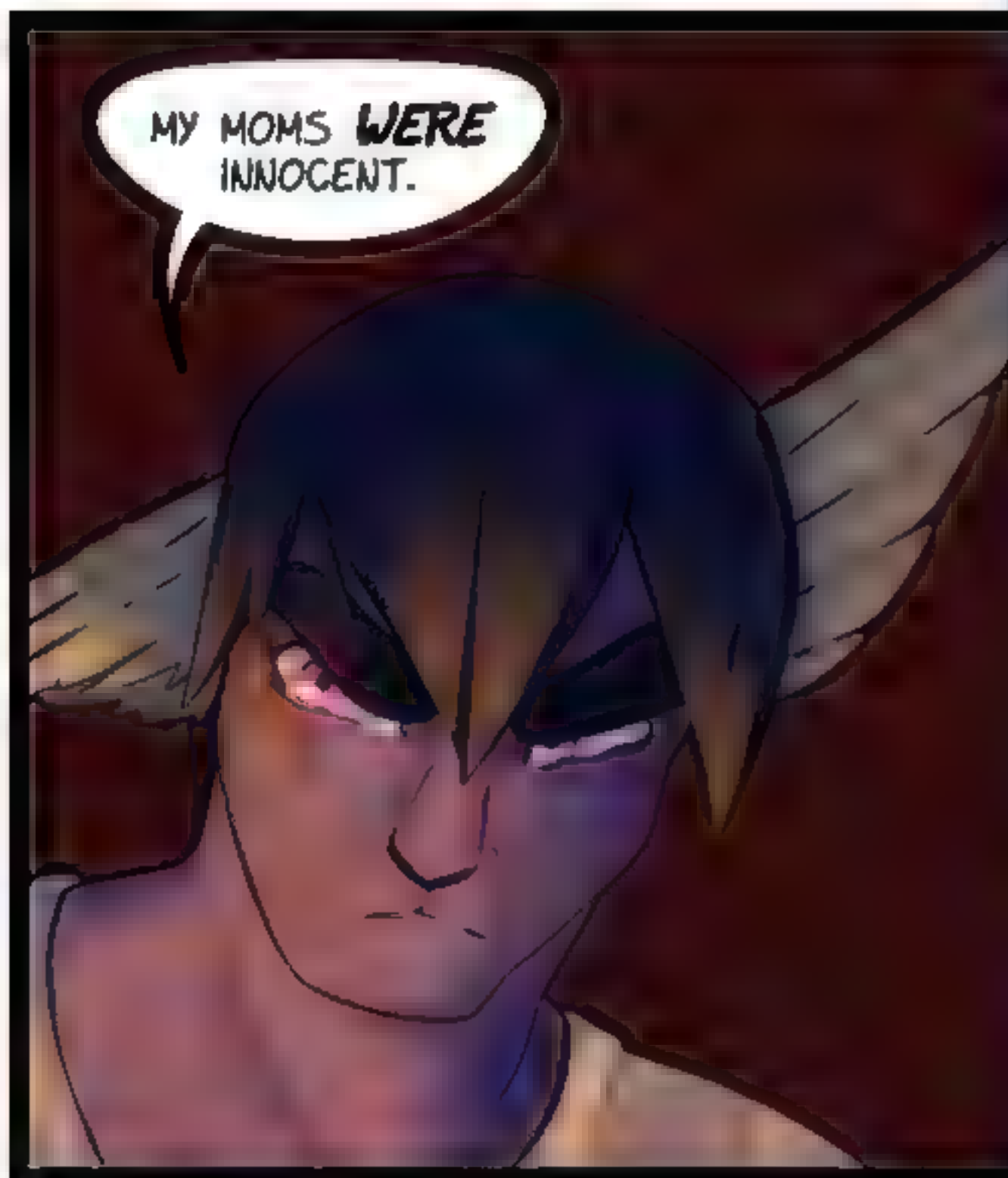


SHE KILLED
MY PARENTS!



I KNOW. THAT
WAS HER JOB.

THE RHO-DA AGNA
ARE SCARY FOLKS, BUT
THEY'RE NOT *BAD* FOLKS.
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THEY
KEEP A LOT OF INNOCENT
PEOPLE SAFE.



MY MOMS *WERE*
INNOCENT.



NO, OZ.
THEY WEREN'T.



YES, THEY'D
TURNED THEMSELVES
AROUND...

YES, THEY
REBUILT THEIR LIVES
AND DID GOOD HONEST
WORK, FOR YOU.

YES, THEY
WERE **SET UP** --

--SCAPEGOATED TO
KEEP THOTZEV'S UNIT OFF
SOMEONE **ELSE'S** TRAIL.

BUT I KNOW
YOU'VE HEARD OF
THEIR BODY COUNT.

AND THOTZEV?
EVEN TODAY, SHE
PROBABLY DOESN'T REALIZE
THOSE TWO HAD CLEANED
UP THEIR ACT BY THE
TIME SHE FOUND 'EM.

DOESN'T KNOW
THE REAL BAD GUYS
GOT AWAY.



BUT I --

SO I'M
SUPPOSED TO
JUST --

WHAT, THAT
MAKES ALL OF
IT **OKAY?**



HELL NO.

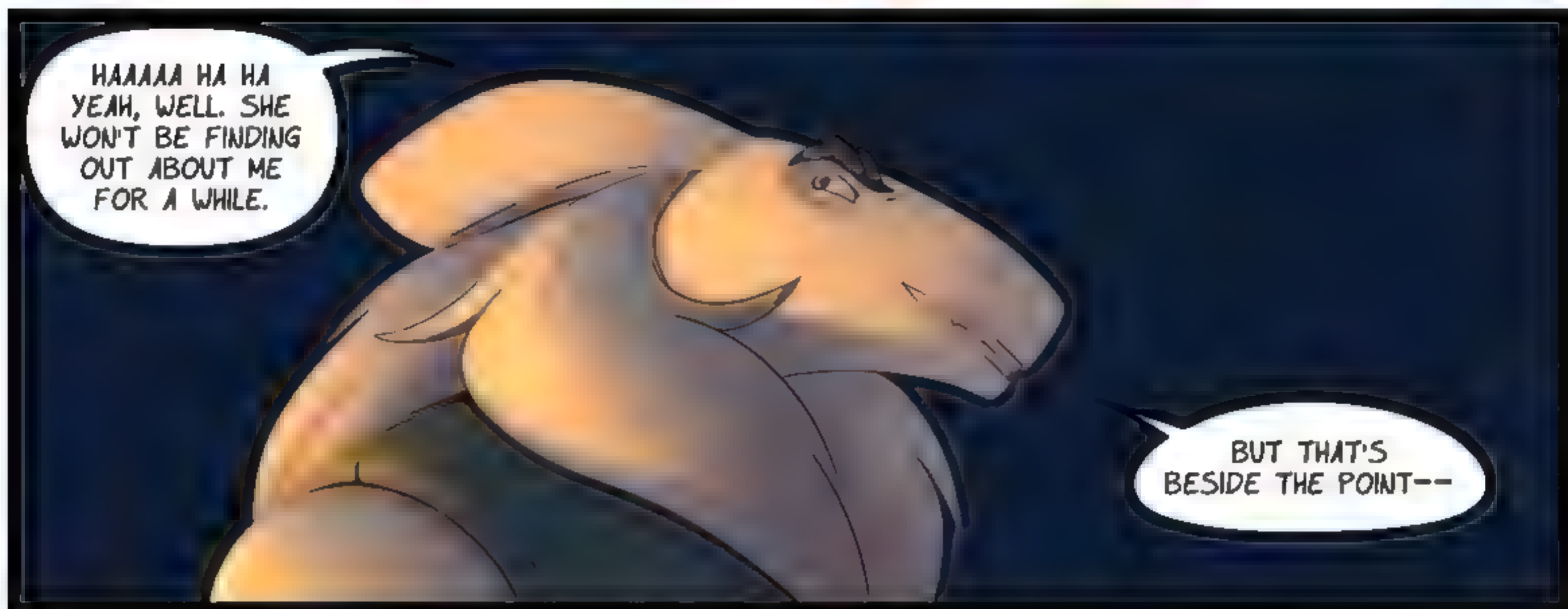
IT'S SUPPOSED
TO MAKE YOU REALIZE
THAT **YOU** AREN'T IN
DANGER JUST BECAUSE
SHE'S HERE.

YOU MAY HAVE
A GRUDGE AGAINST HER--
AND YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT
TO FEEL IT -- BUT SHE
HAS NOTHING AGAINST
YOU. OR ANYONE ELSE
AT THIS SCHOOL.

SHE KILLED ON
ORDERS, NOT
INITIATIVE.



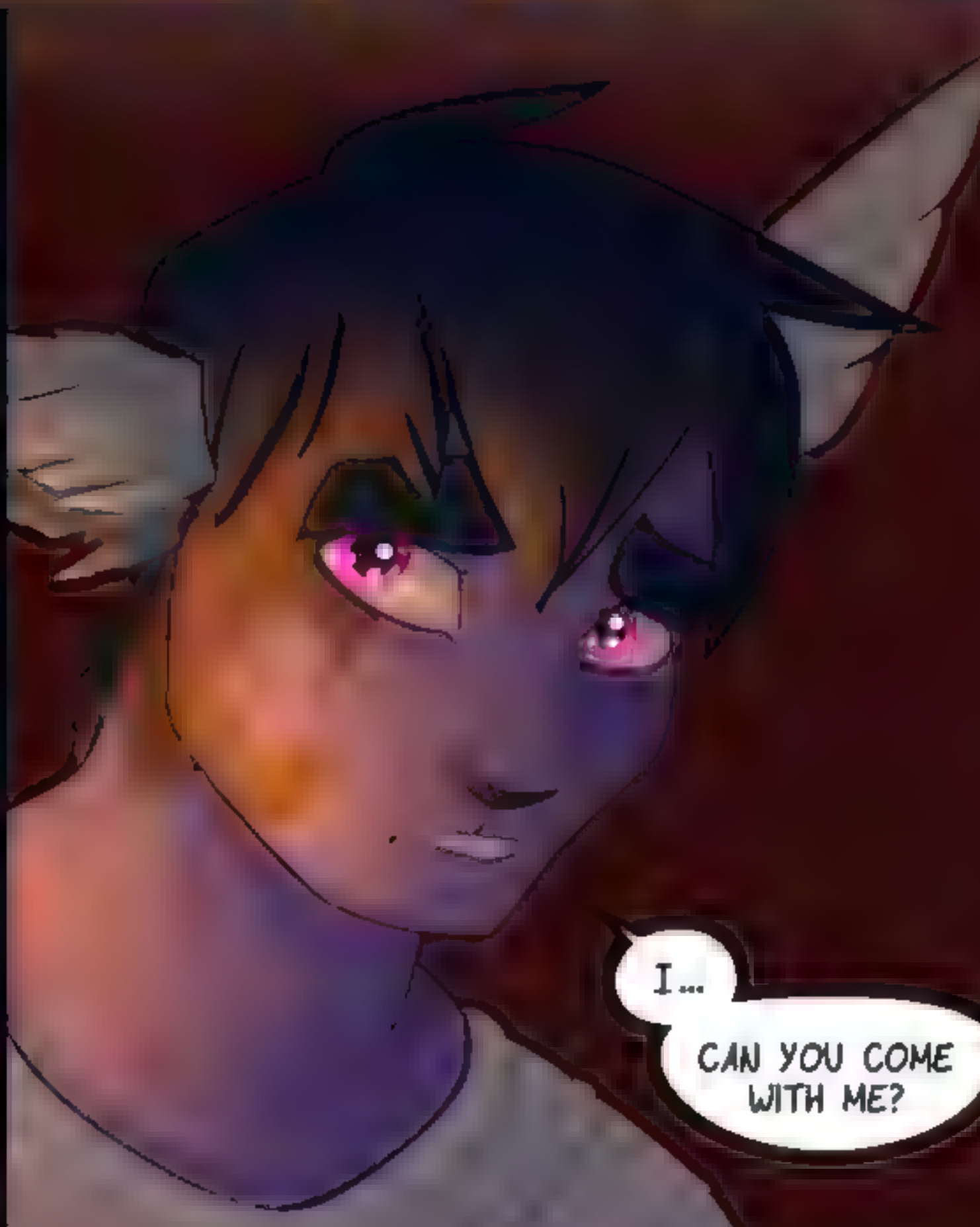
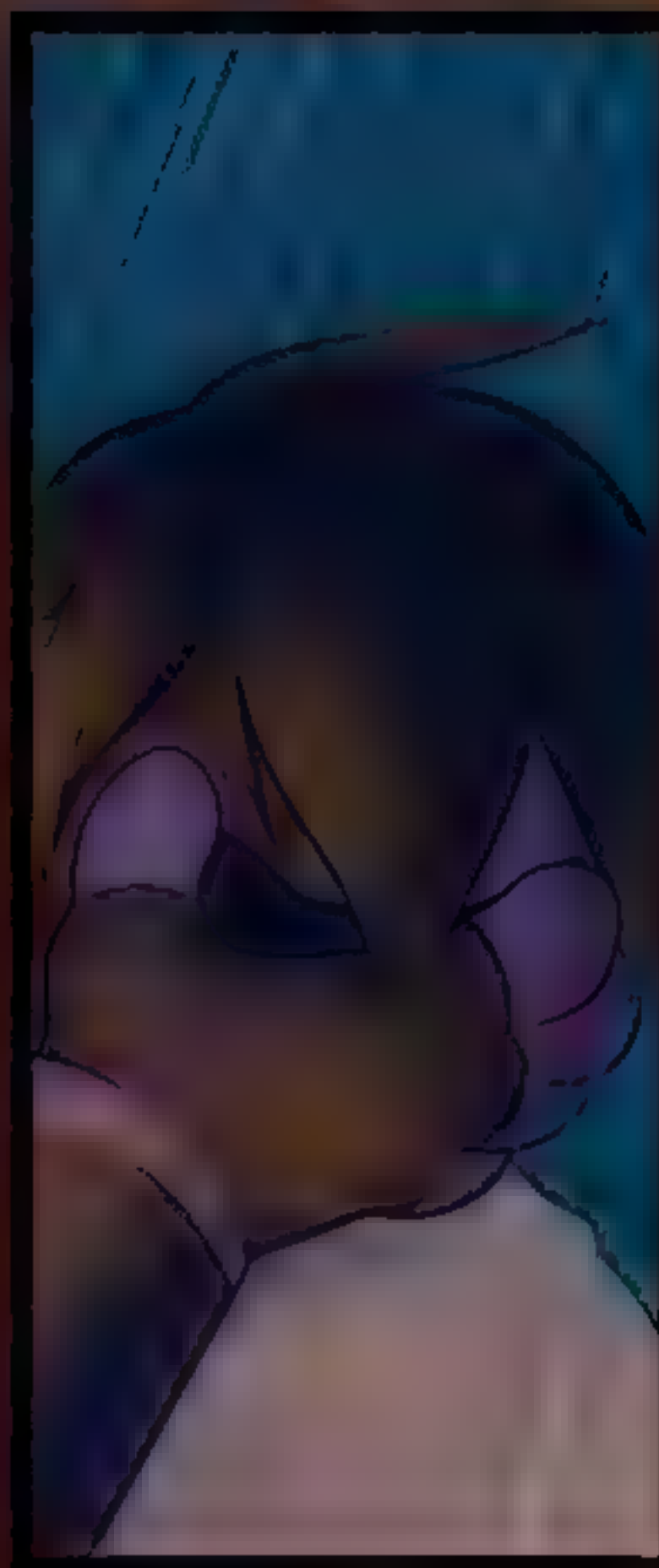
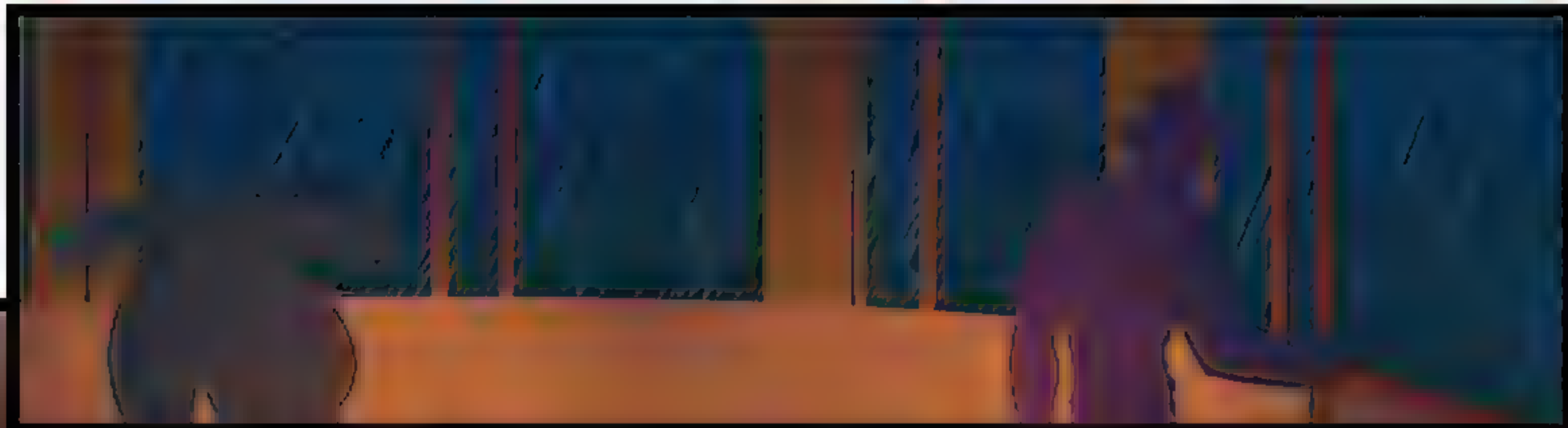
ARE YOU KIDDING
ME? Z, SHE'S EVEN
TRIED TO KILL YOU!
DOESN'T IT AT LEAST
BOTHER YOU THAT
SHE'S HERE?

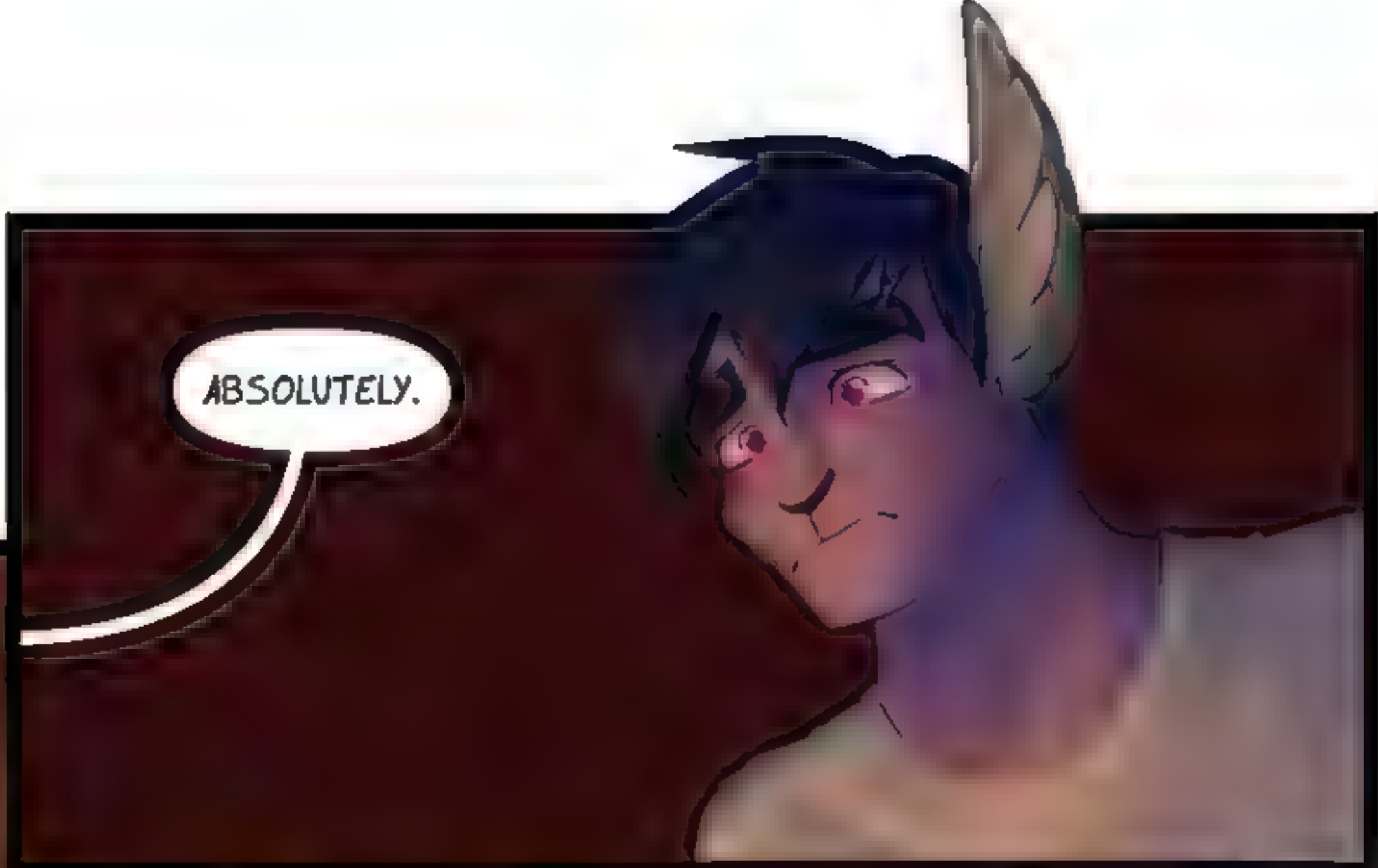


HAHAHA HA HA
YEAH, WELL. SHE
WON'T BE FINDING
OUT ABOUT ME
FOR A WHILE.

BUT THAT'S
BESIDE THE POINT--







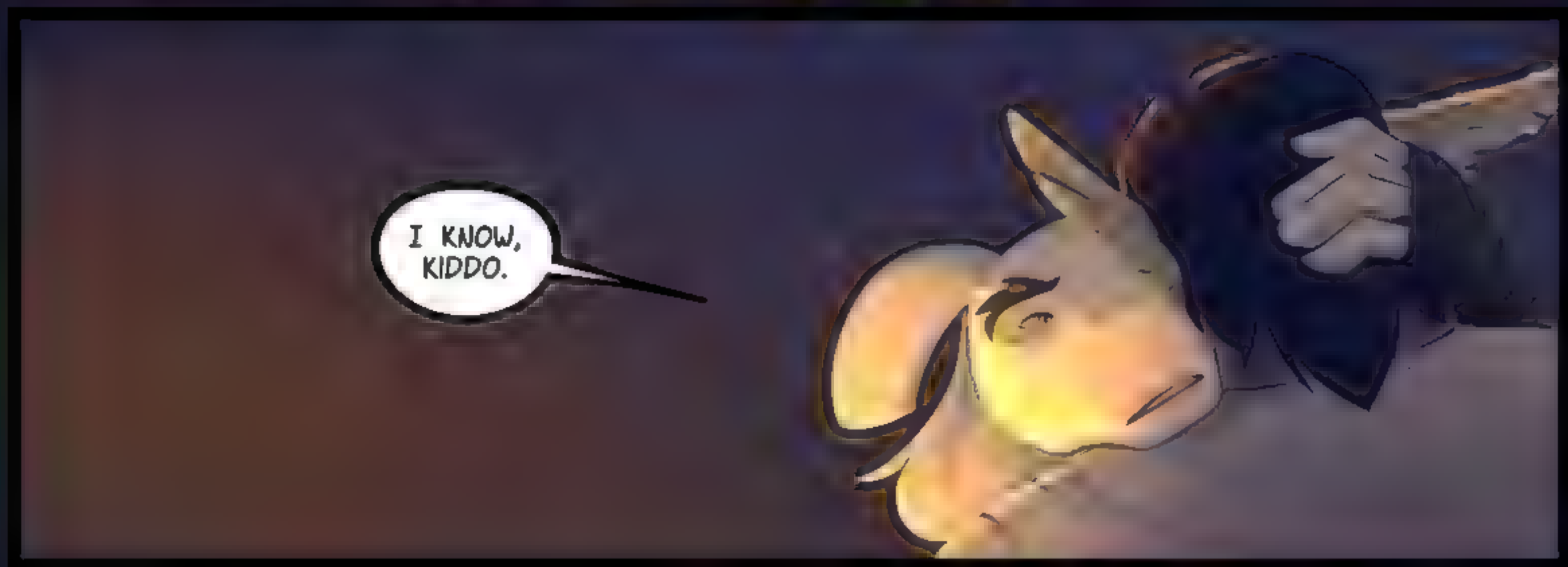
ABSOLUTELY.



BUT FIRST, YOU
NEED TO COME HERE,
LET THAT ALL OUT, AND HAVE
SOME DELICIOUS MEAT.

WE CAN'T HAVE
YOU BAWLING IN THE
HEADMASTER'S OFFICE.





(7:58)
HEY

(7:58)
HEY FALLAN
GUESS WHAT

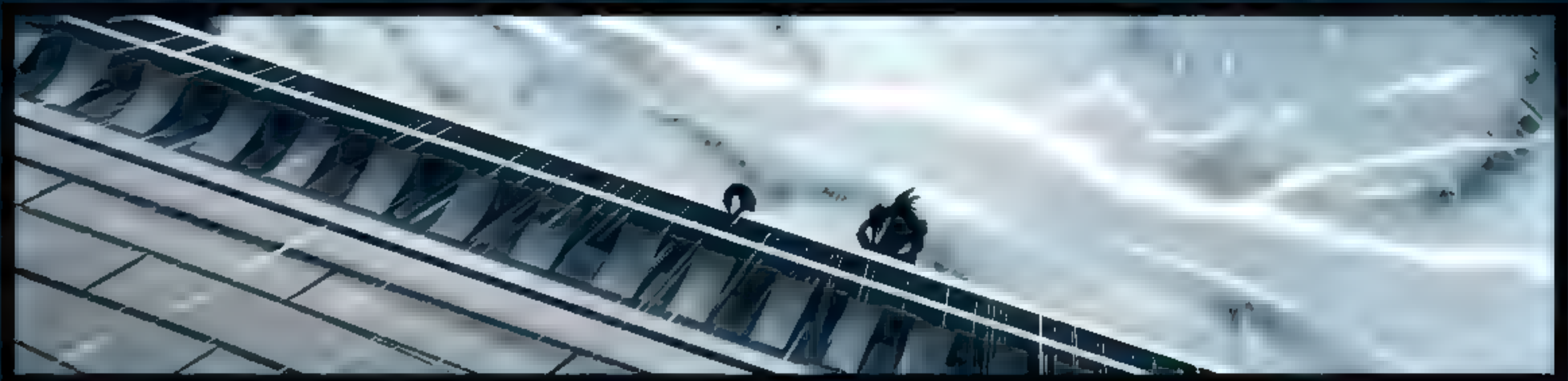
(7:58)
GUESS WHO'S STILL
NOT LATE :D

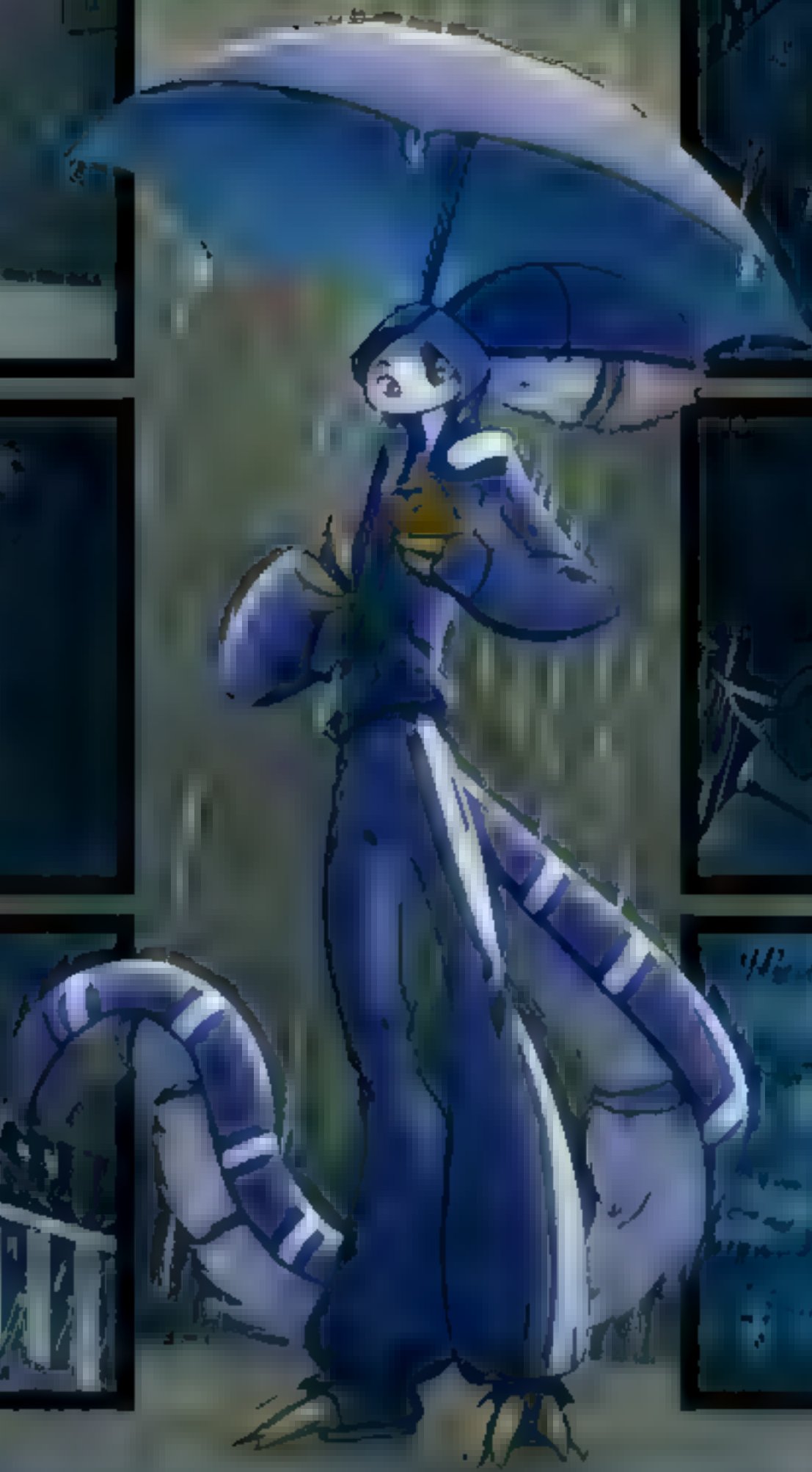
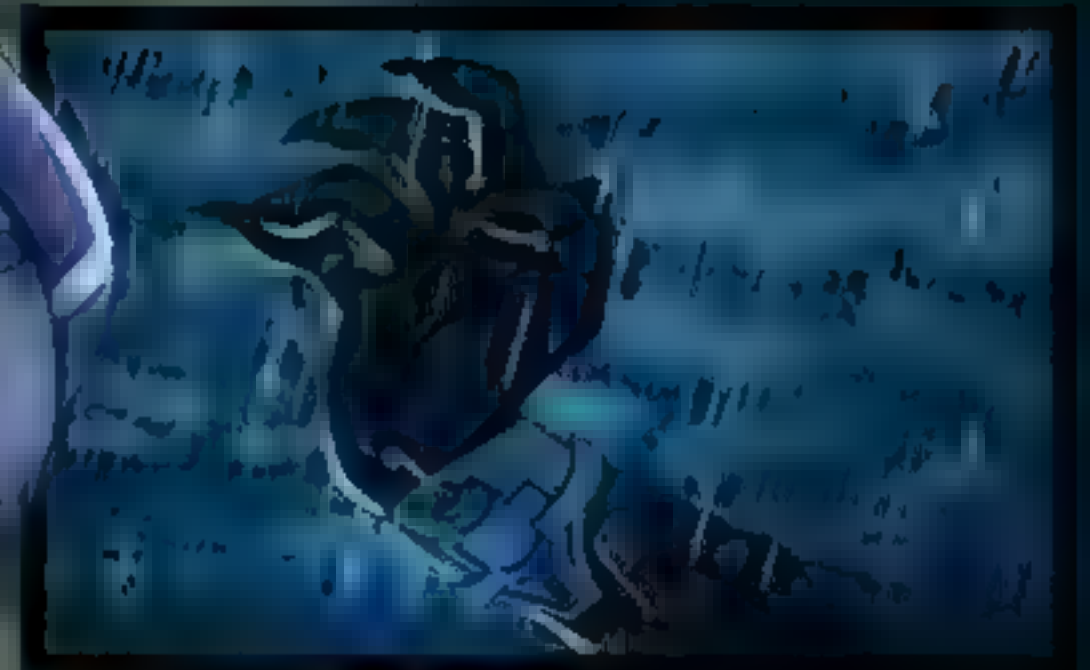
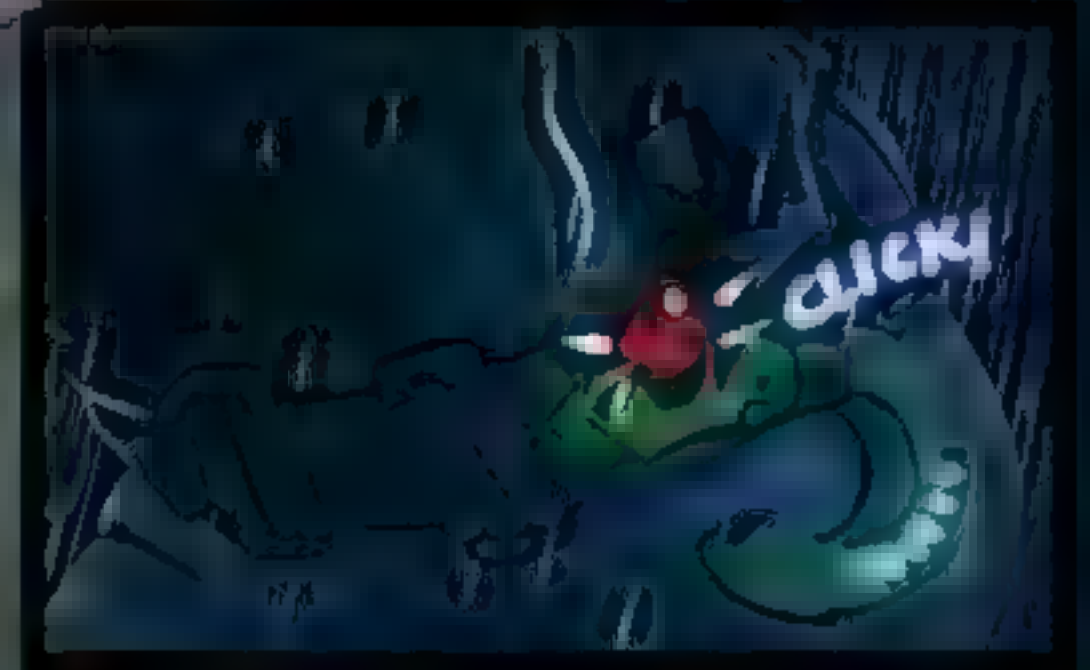
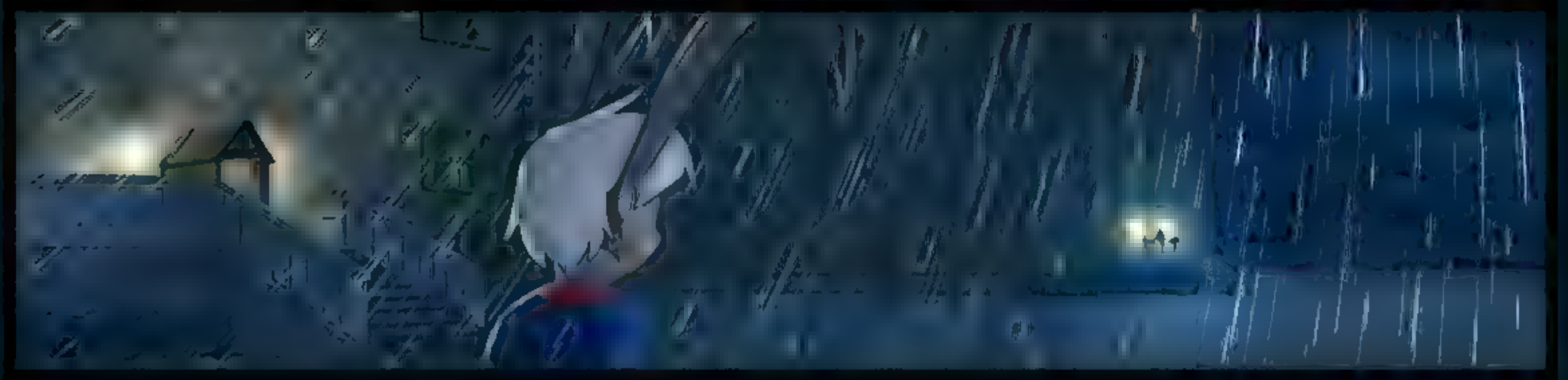
(7:59)
YOU'RE NOT LATE FOR
ANOTHER 30 SECONDS,
BUT AFTER THAT YOU'RE
DEFINITELY LATE.

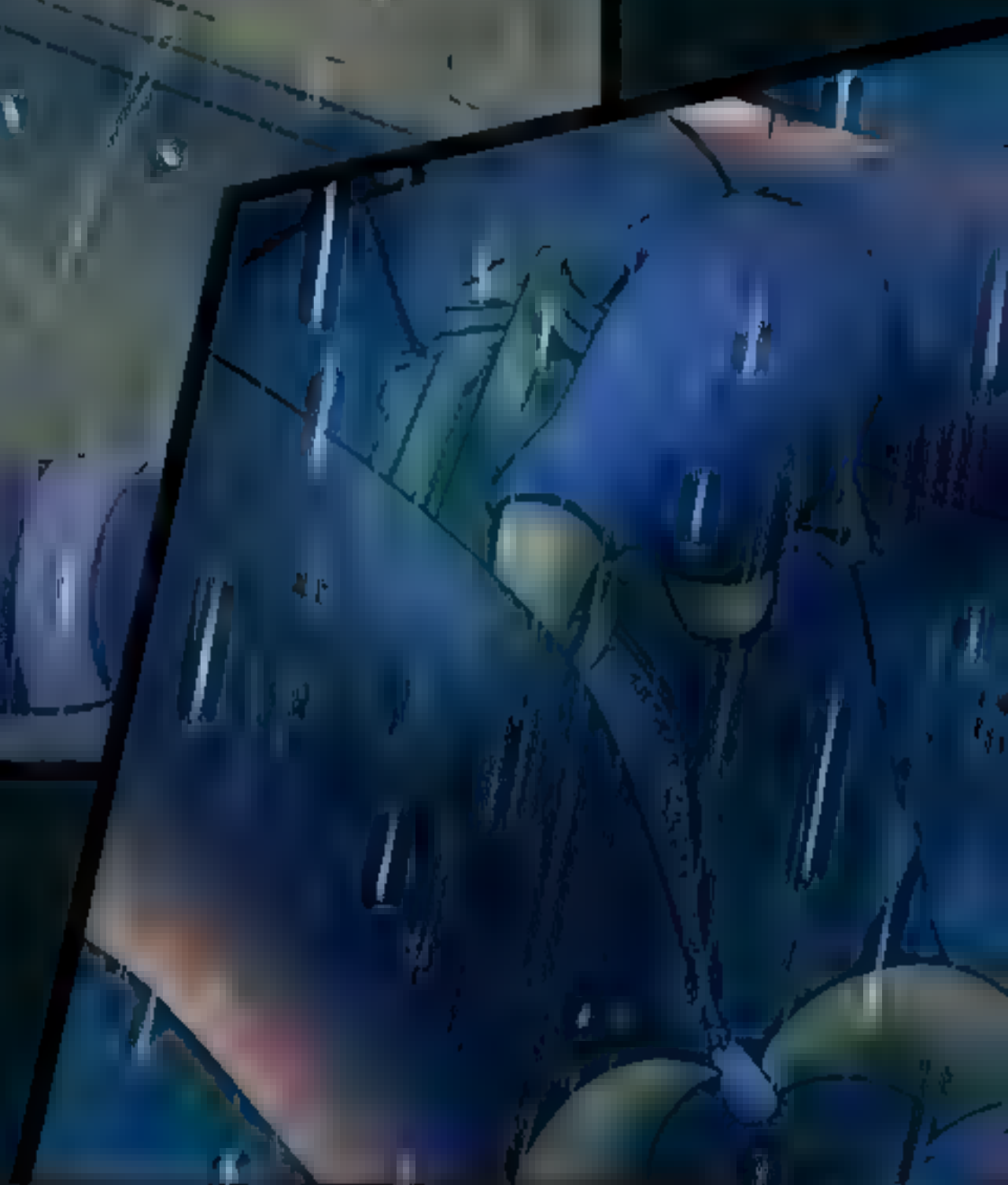
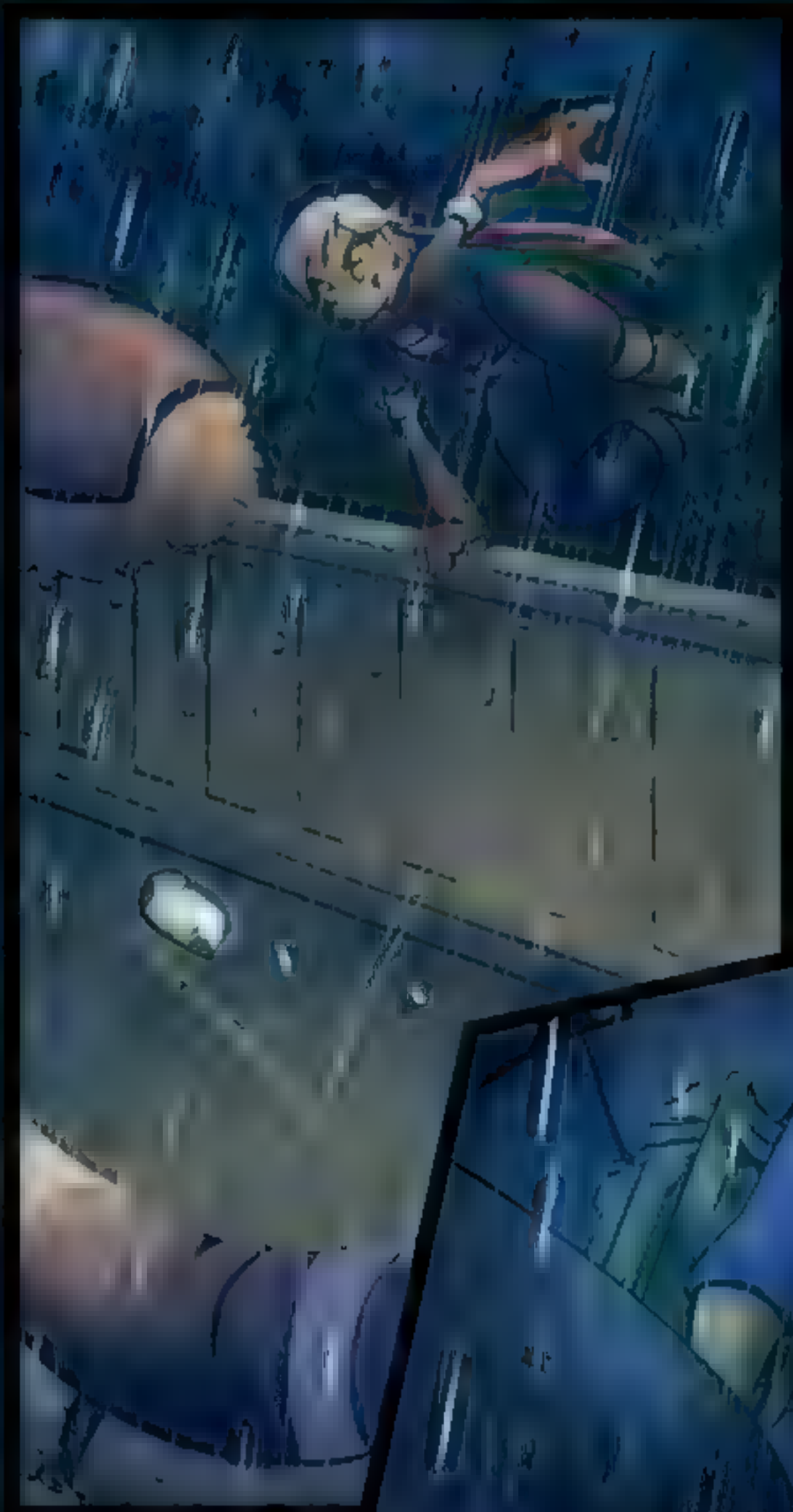
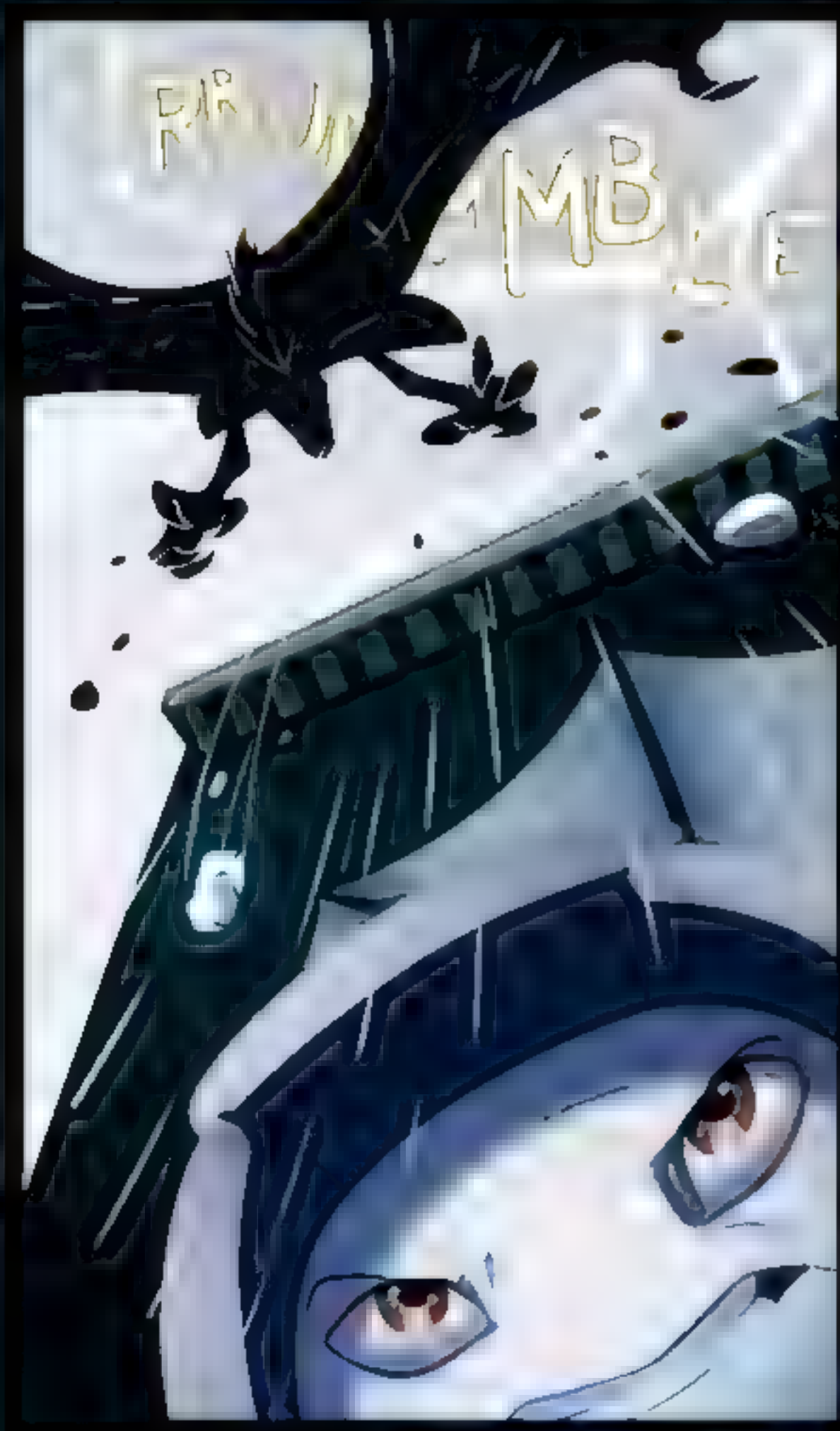
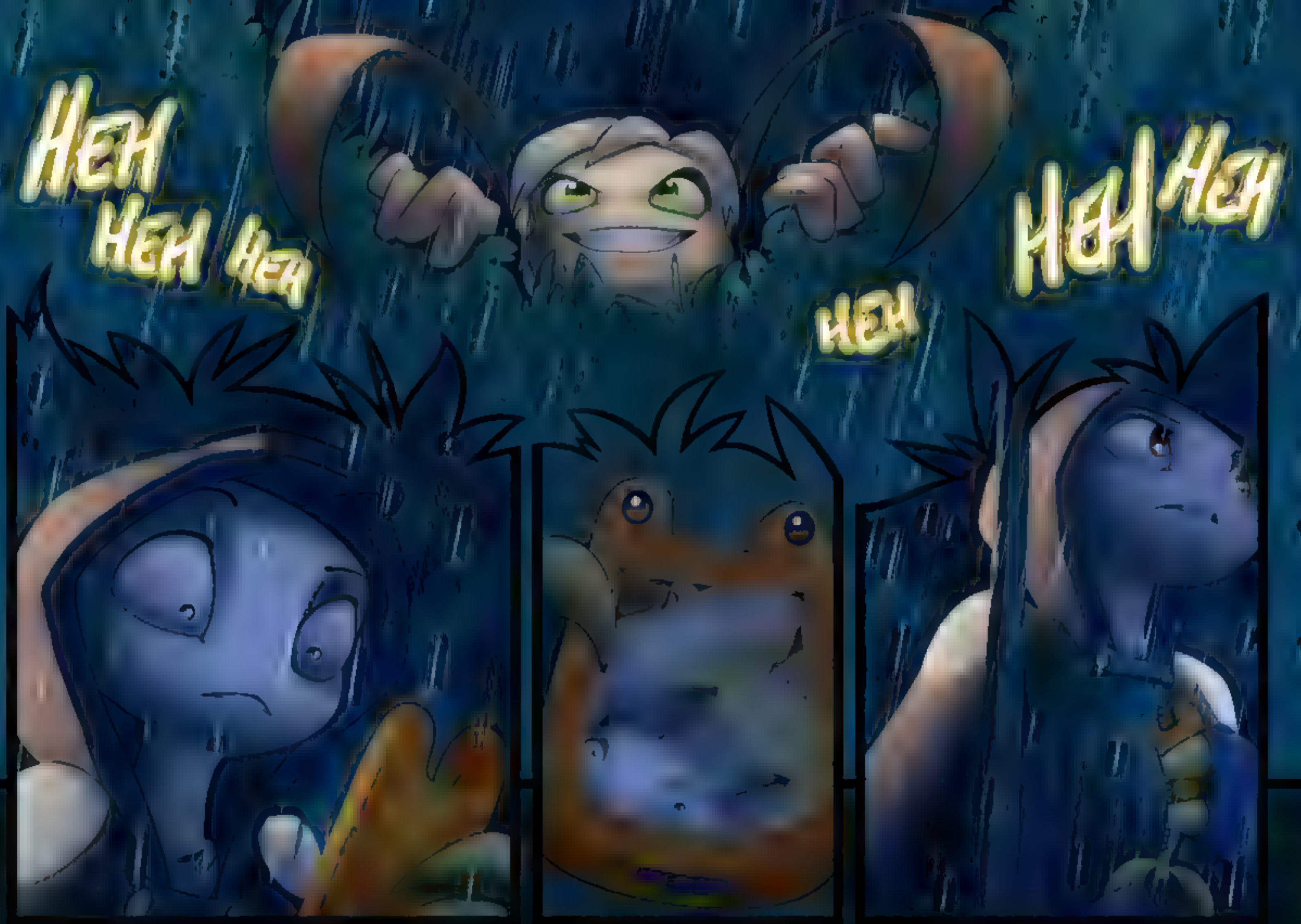
(8:07)
SHUT YOUR FACE



(8:08)
I'M JUST
SAYIN' :)



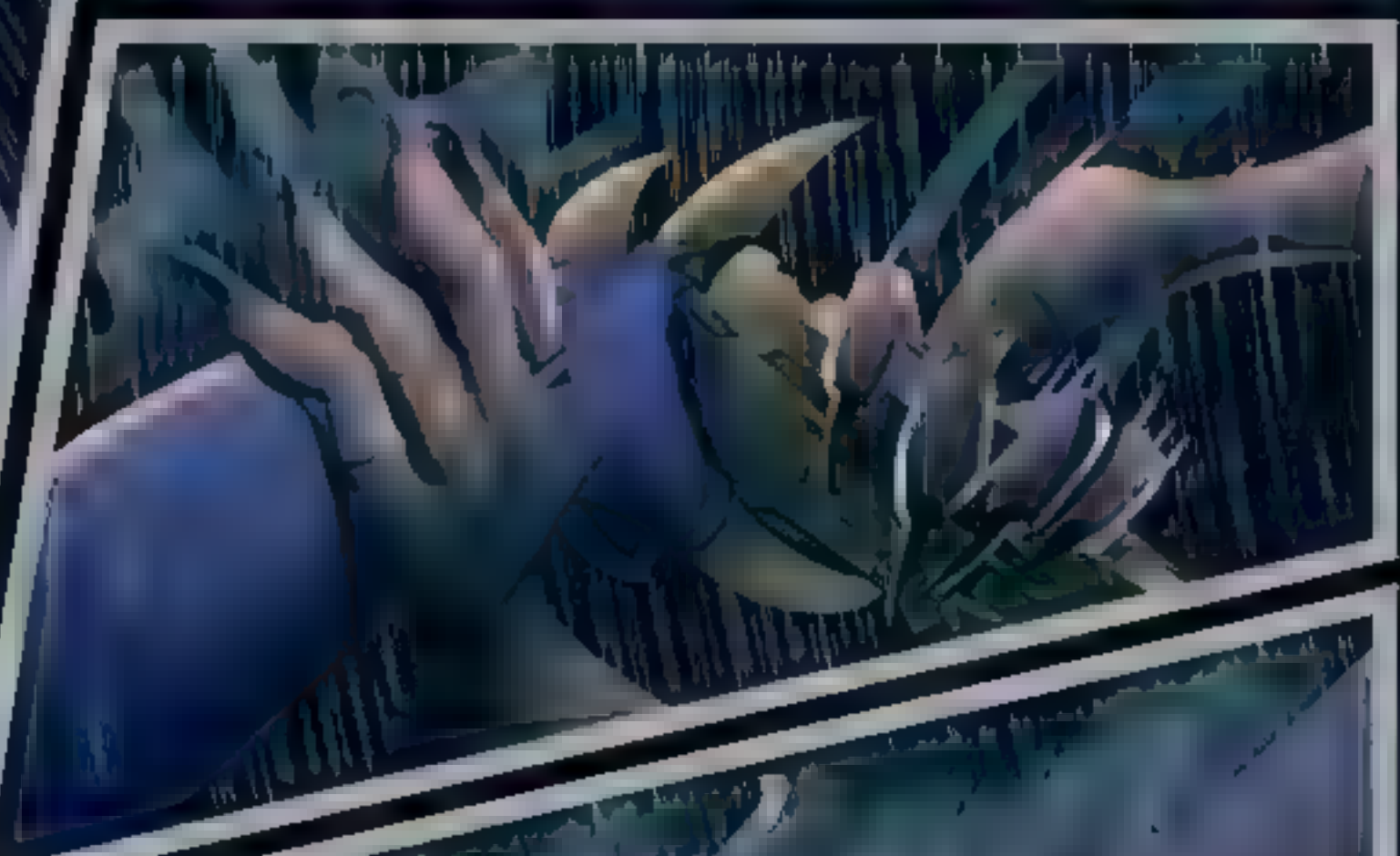


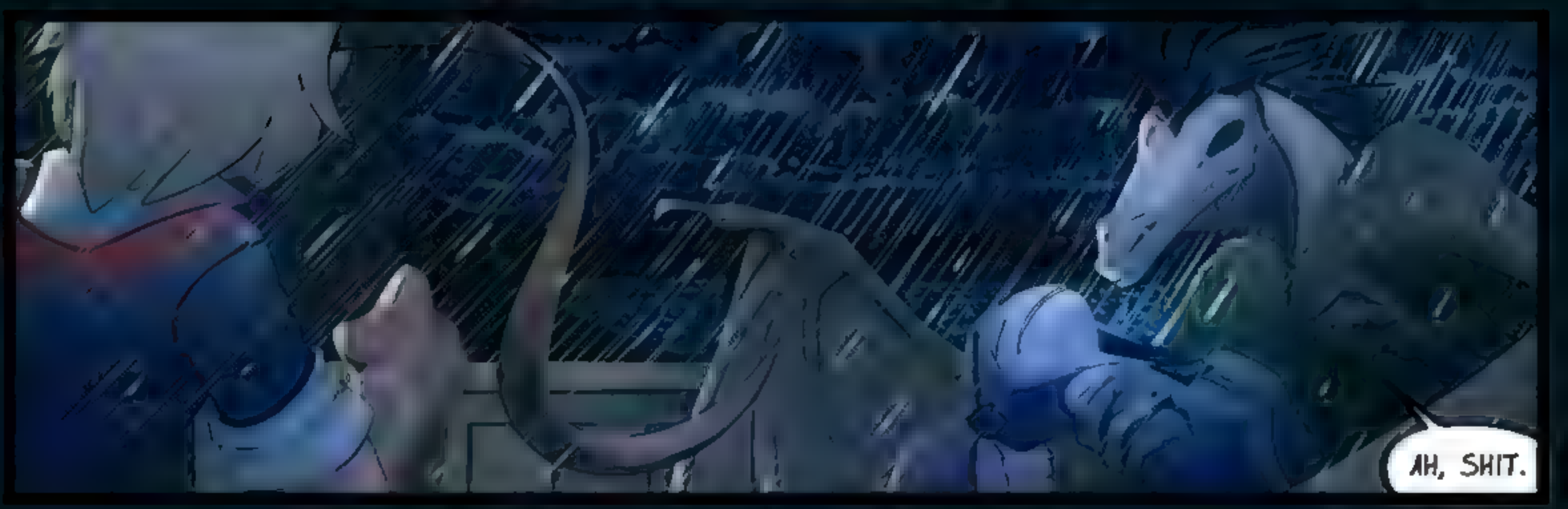
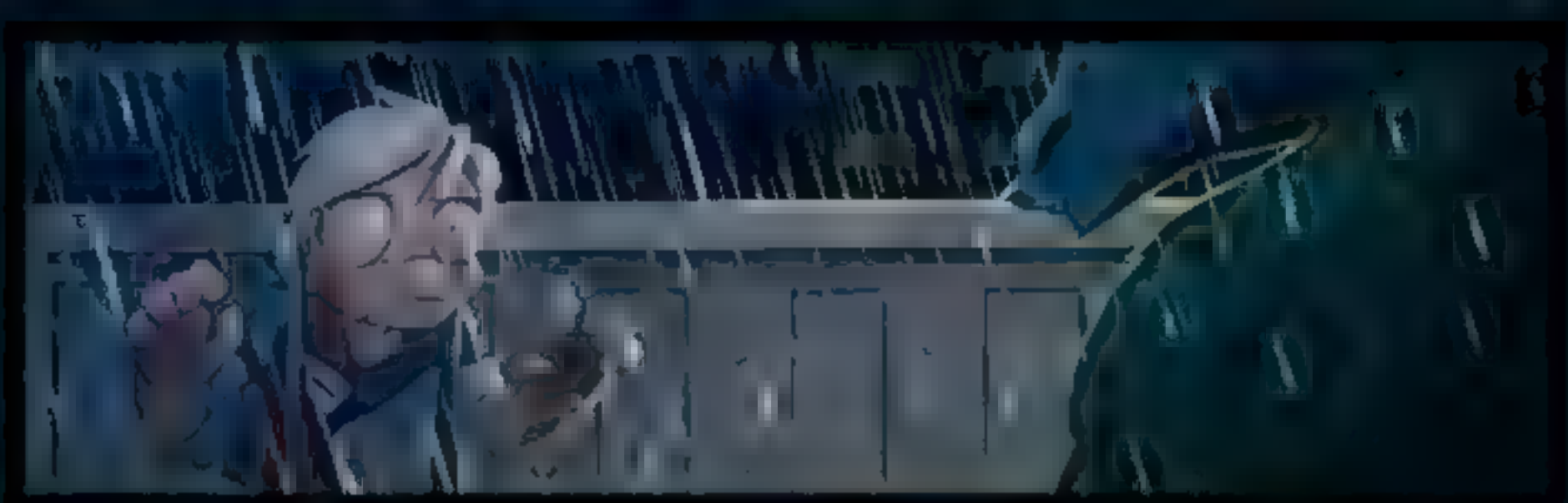
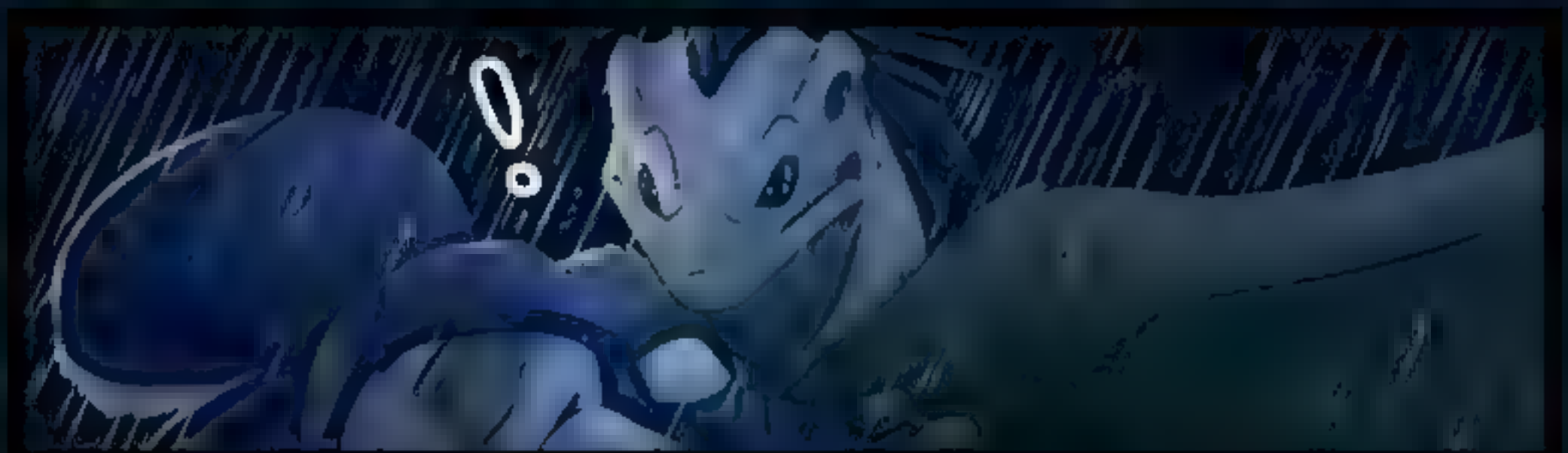
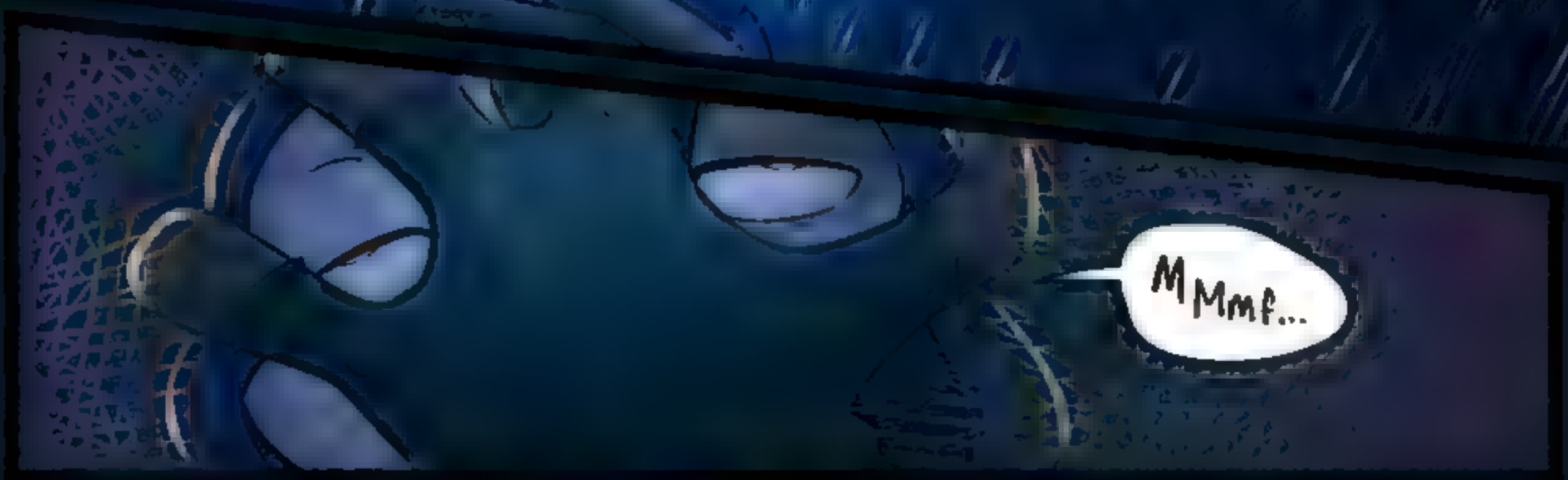
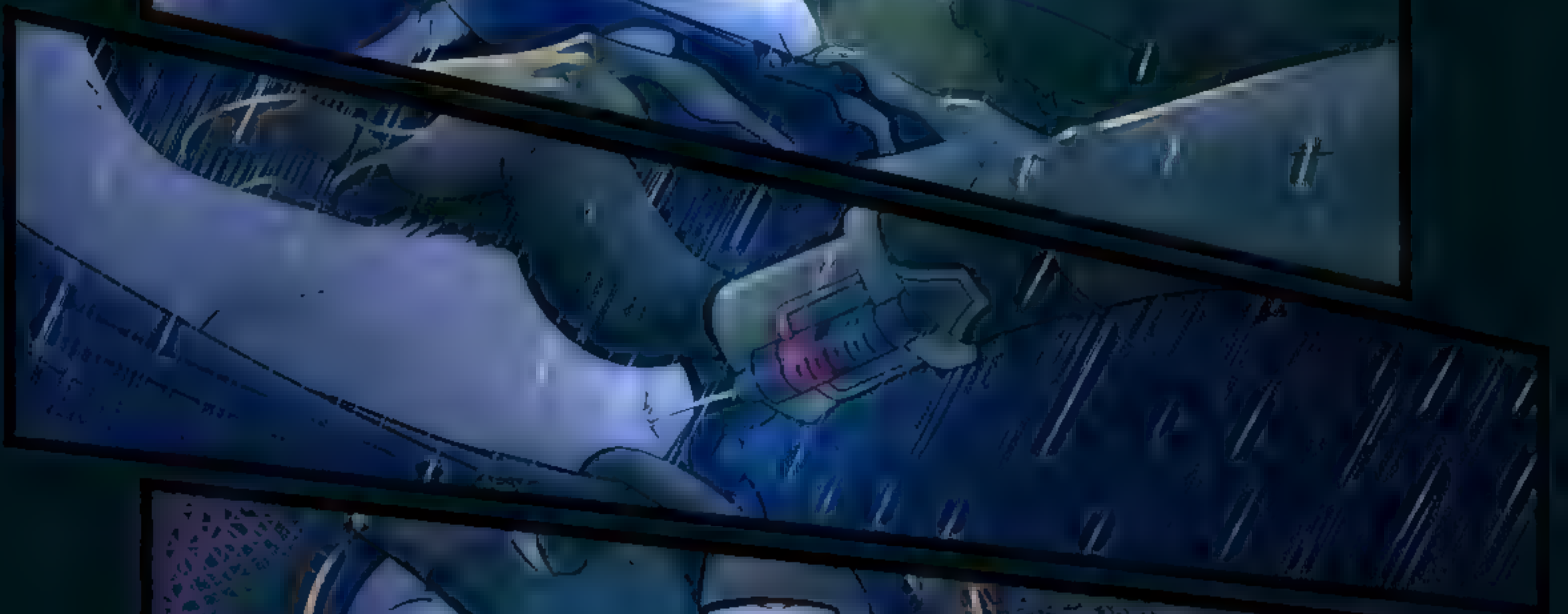
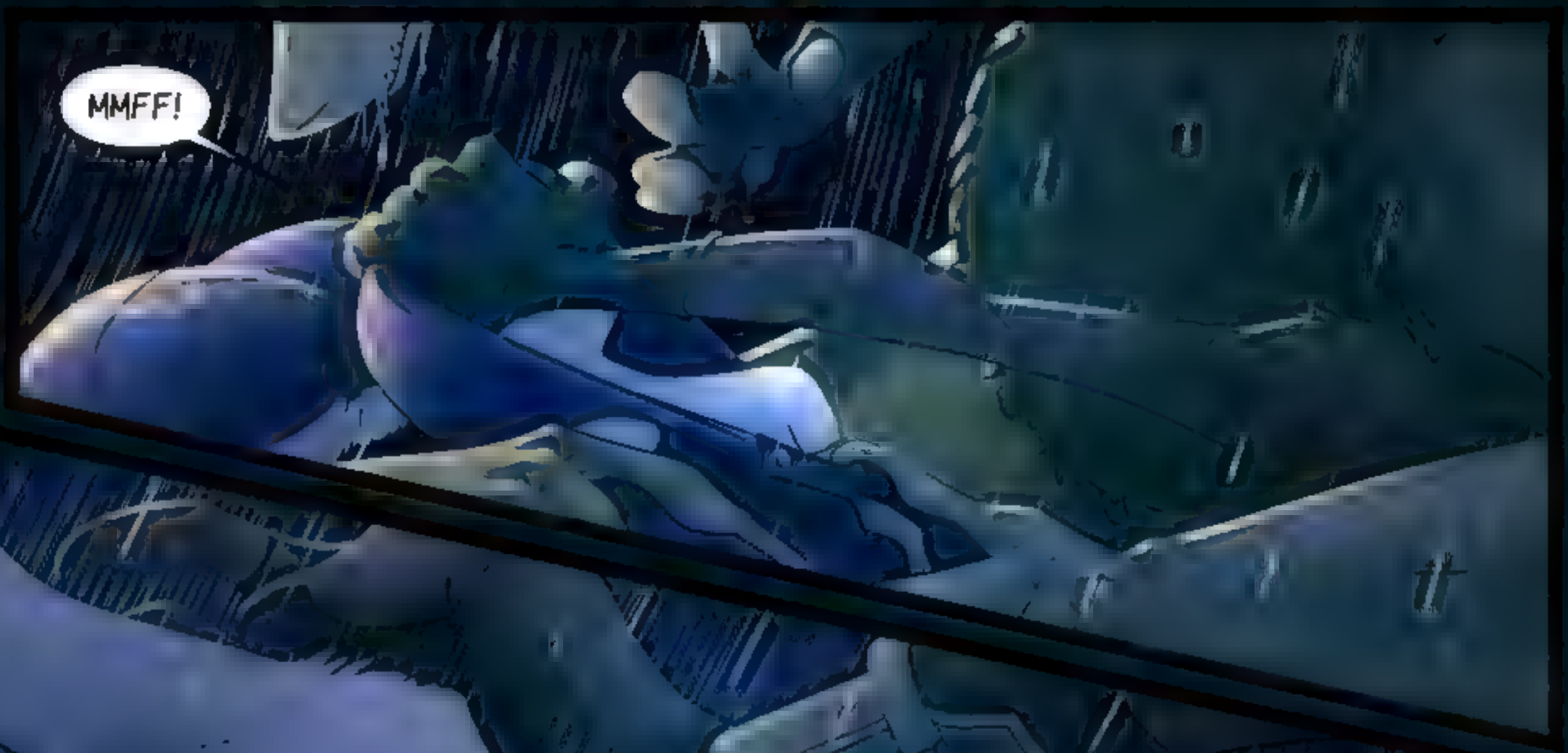


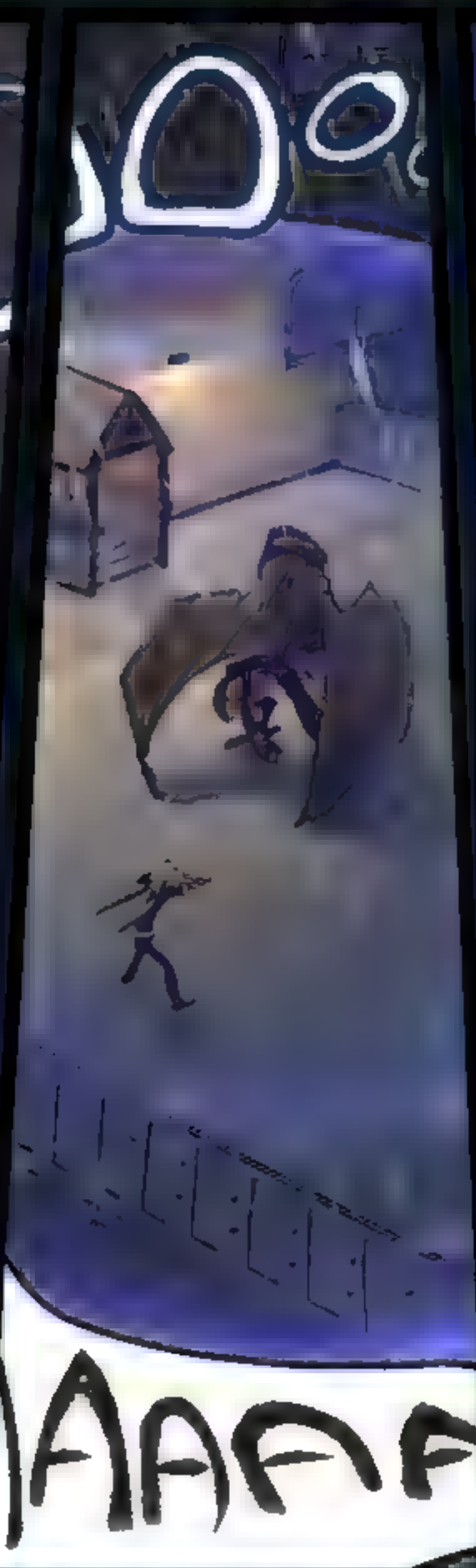
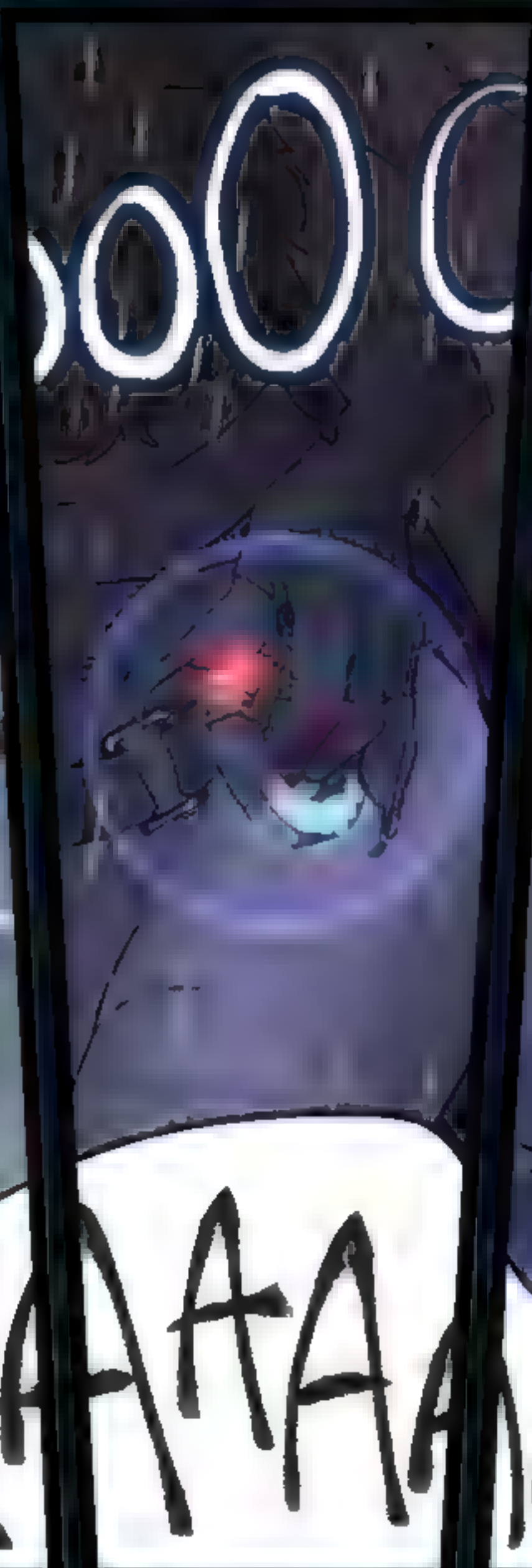
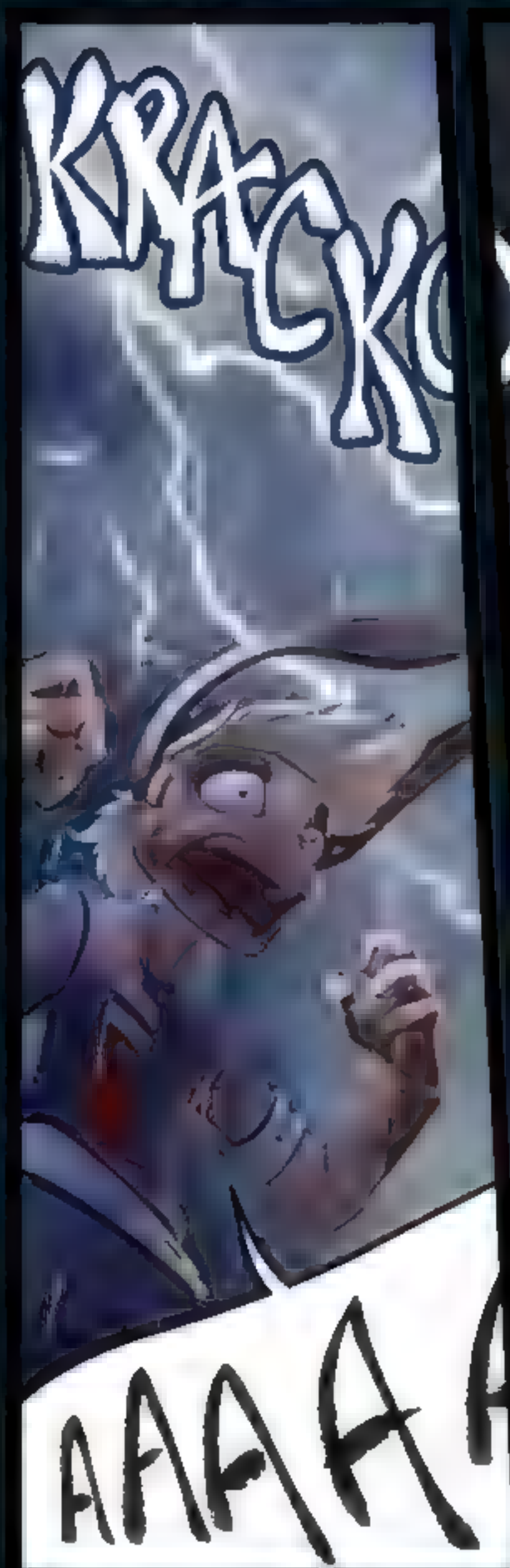
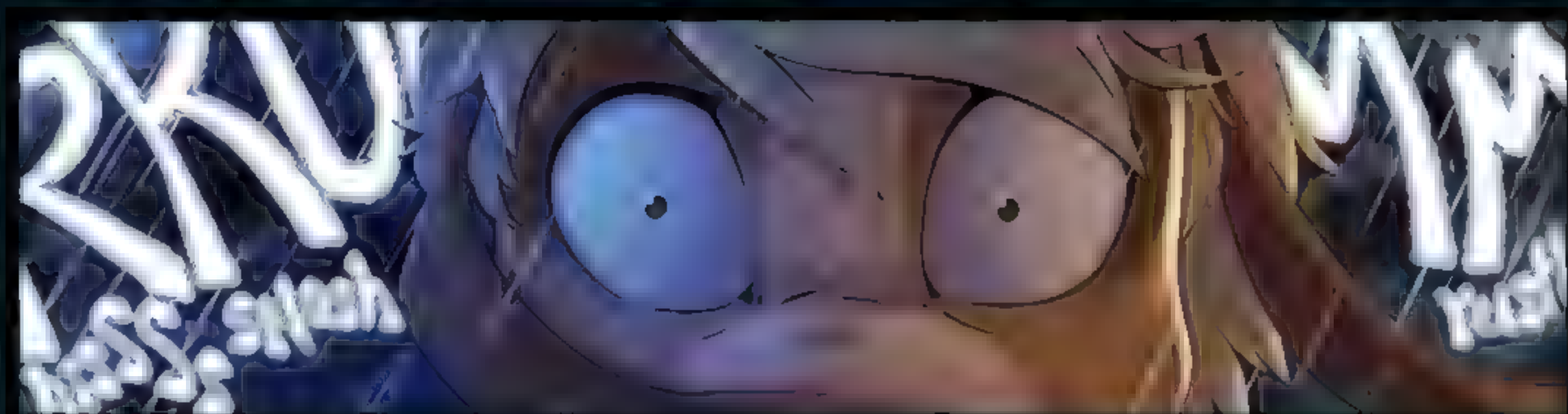
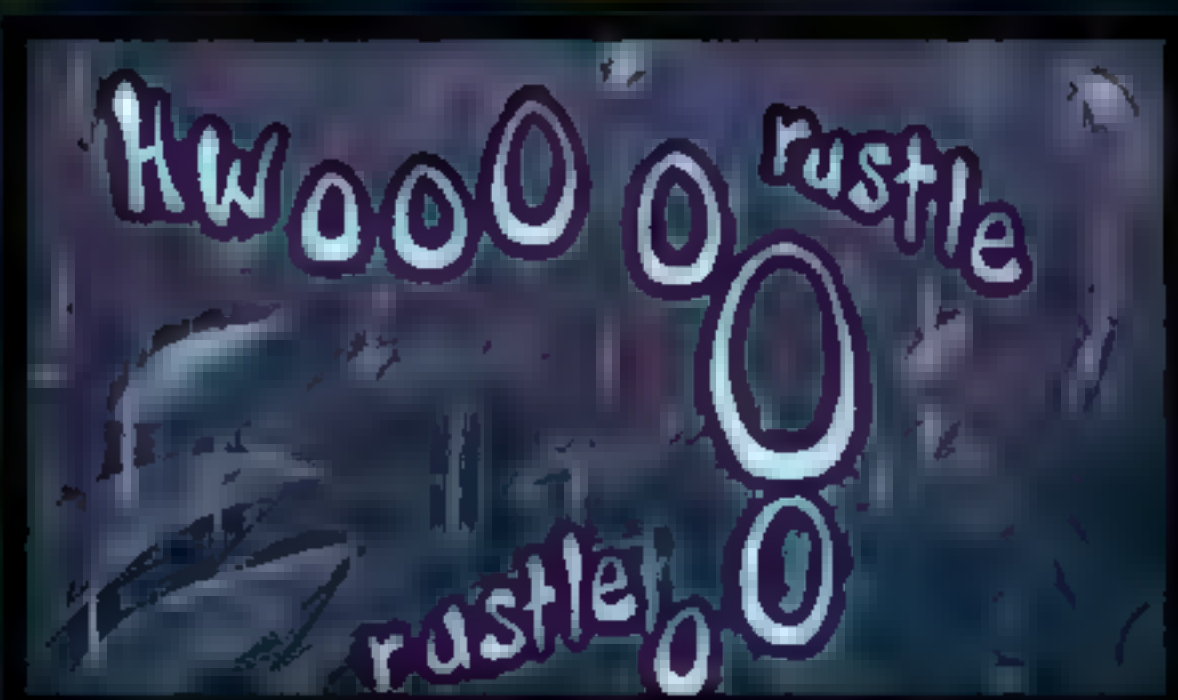
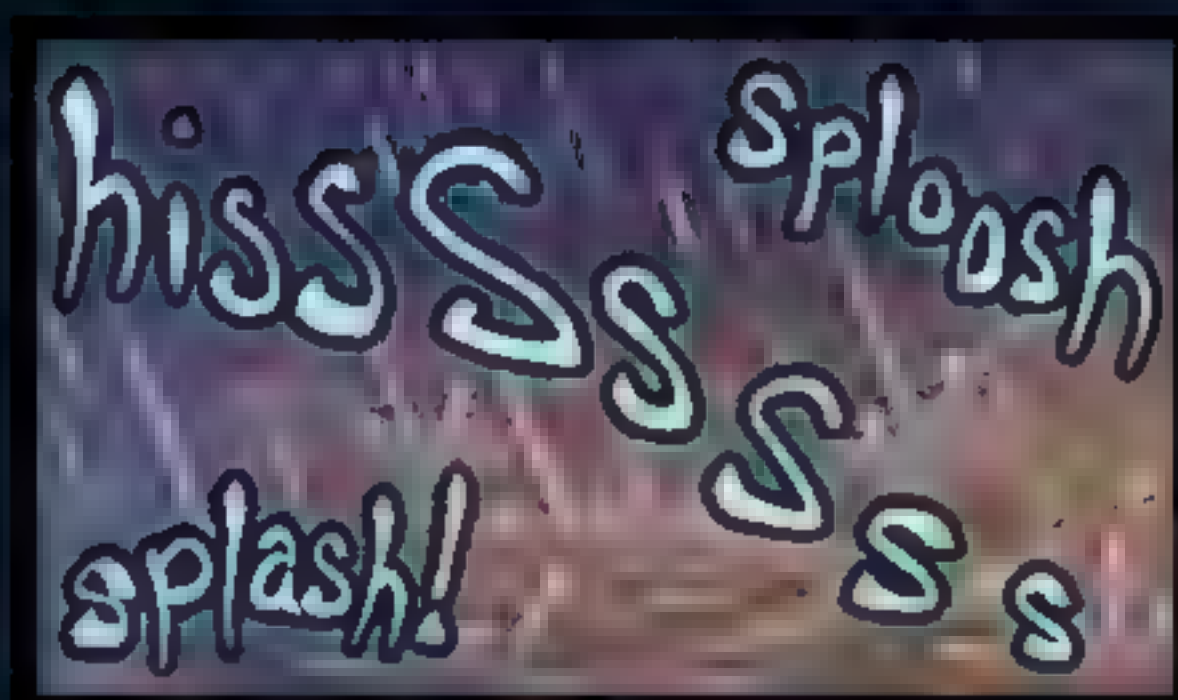


KRACKOOOMM

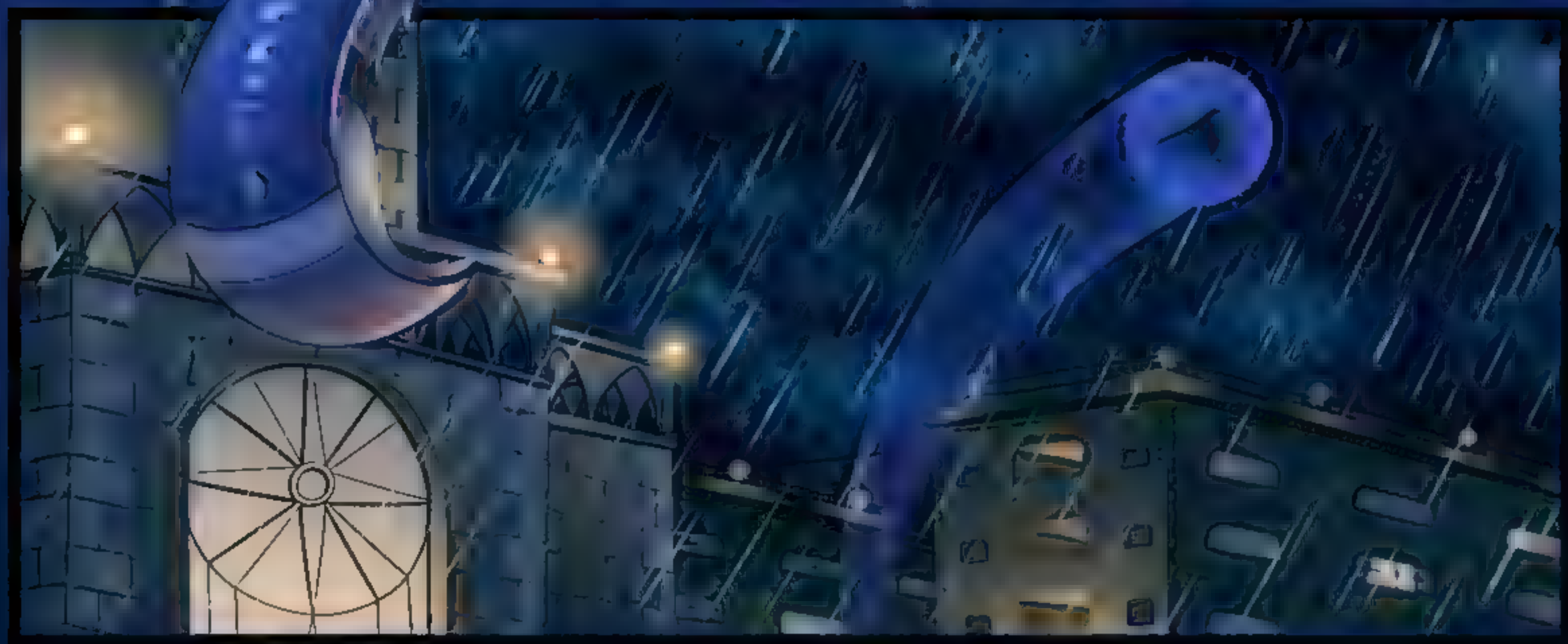
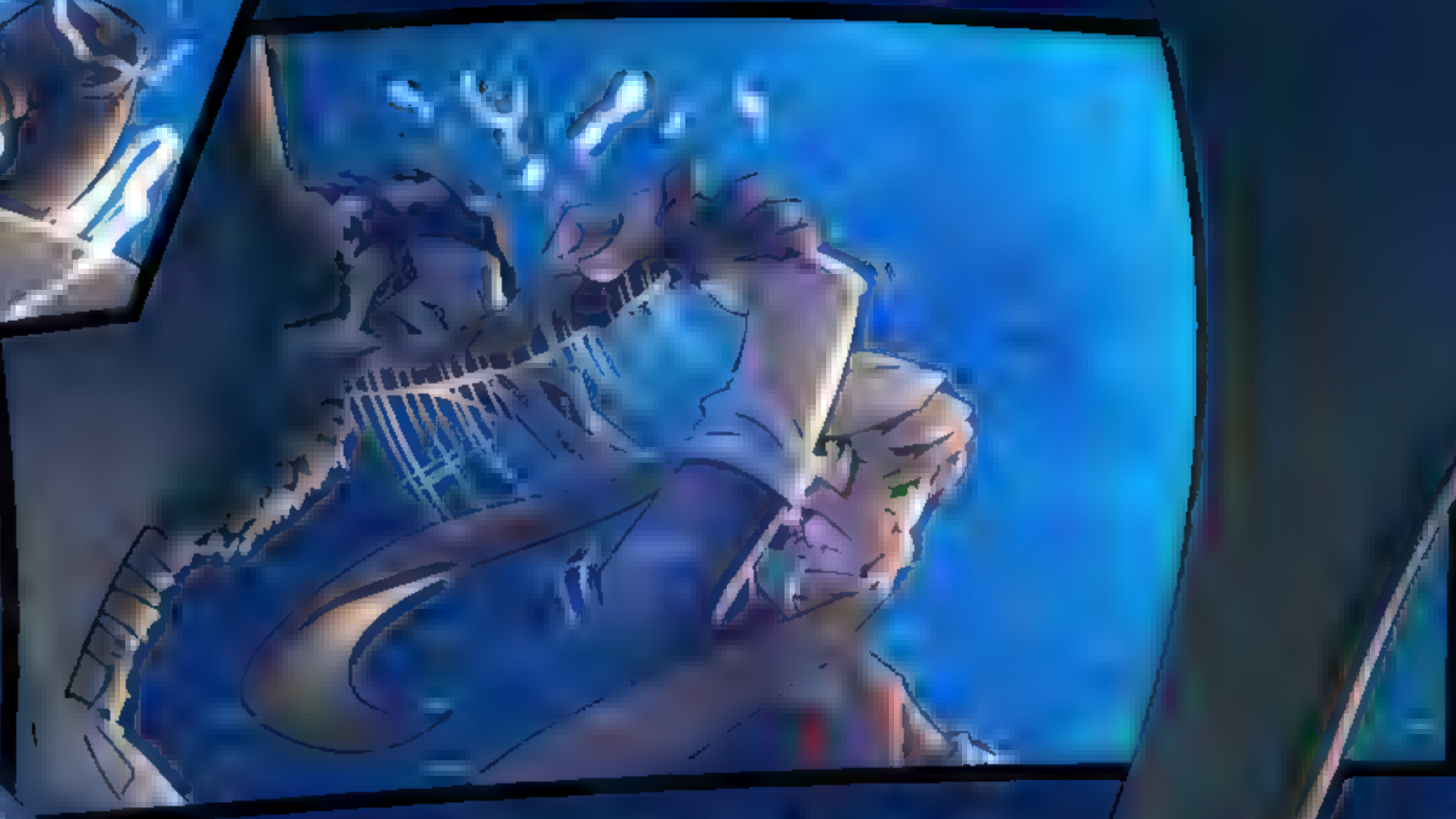
KRACK



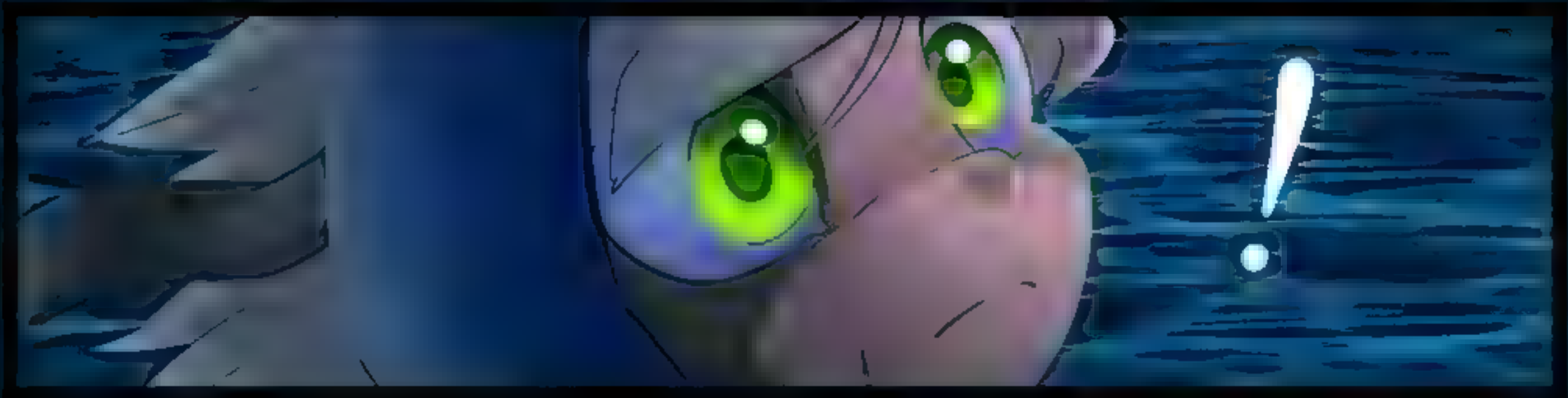
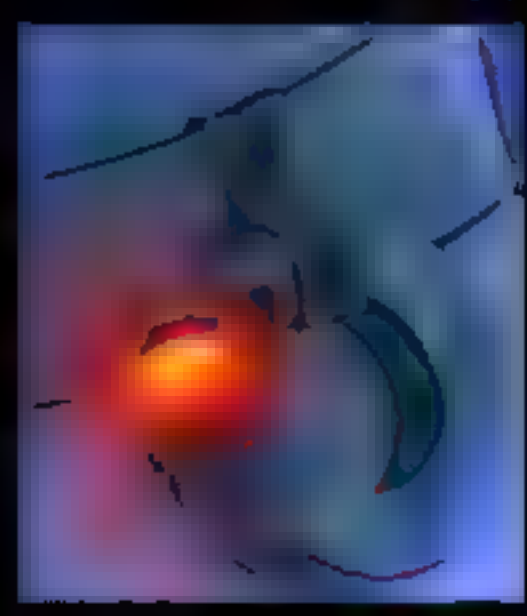
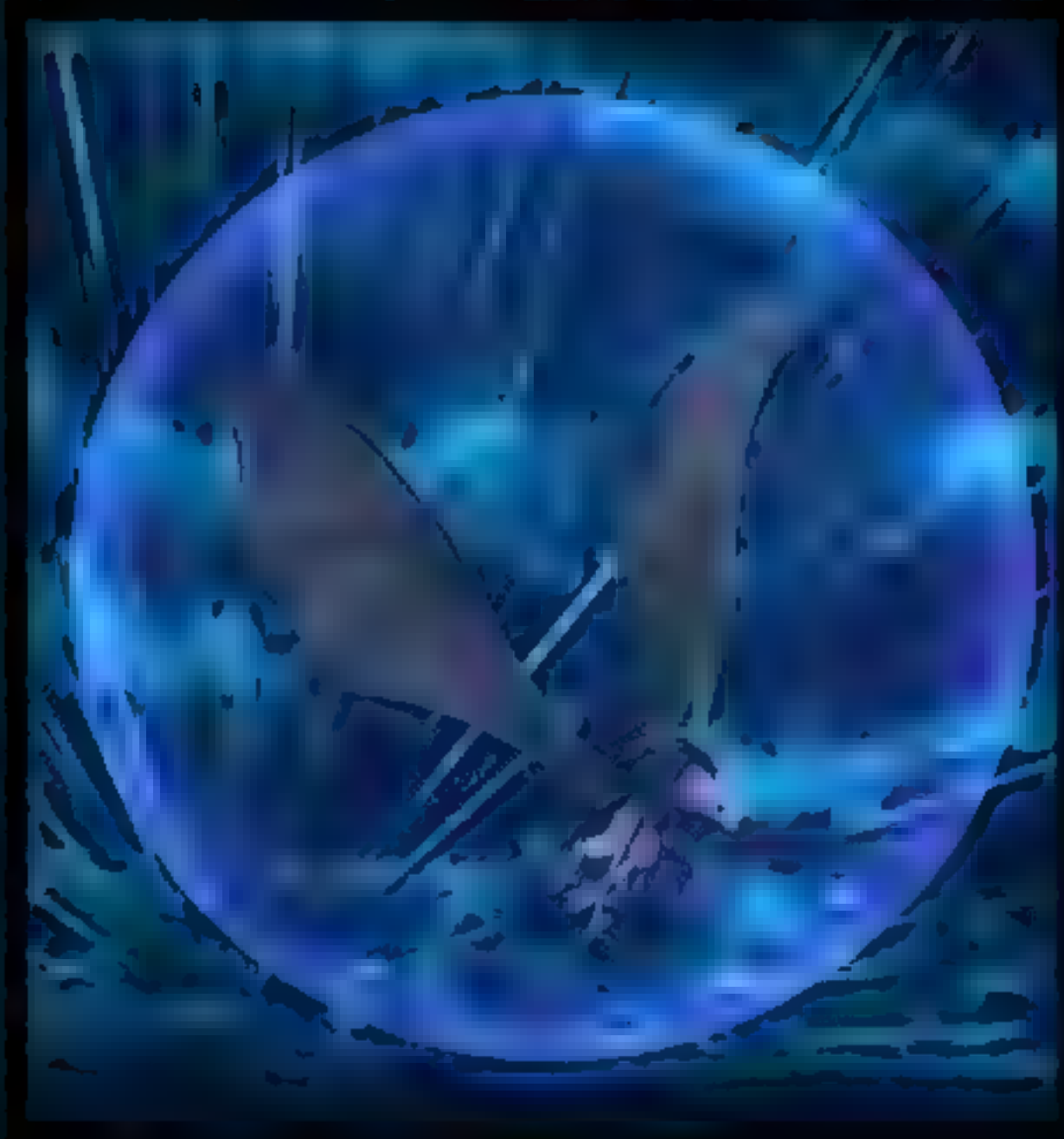




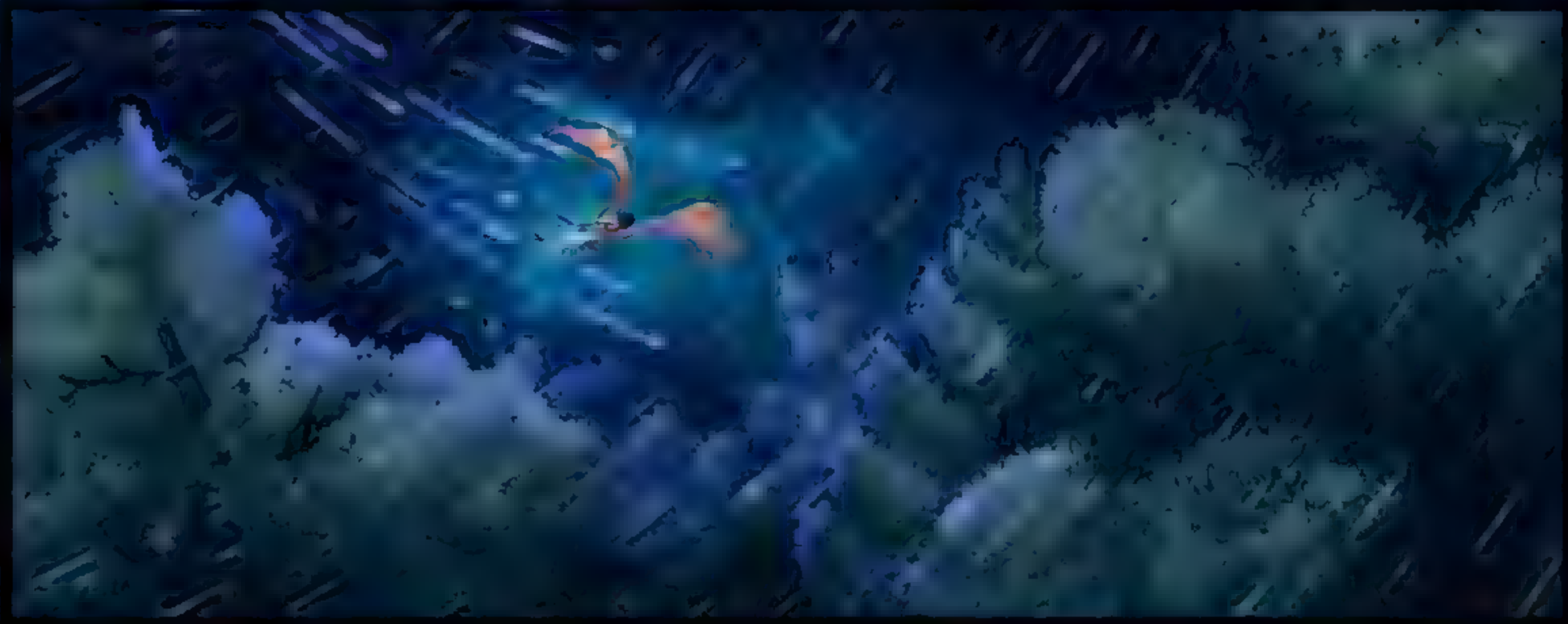


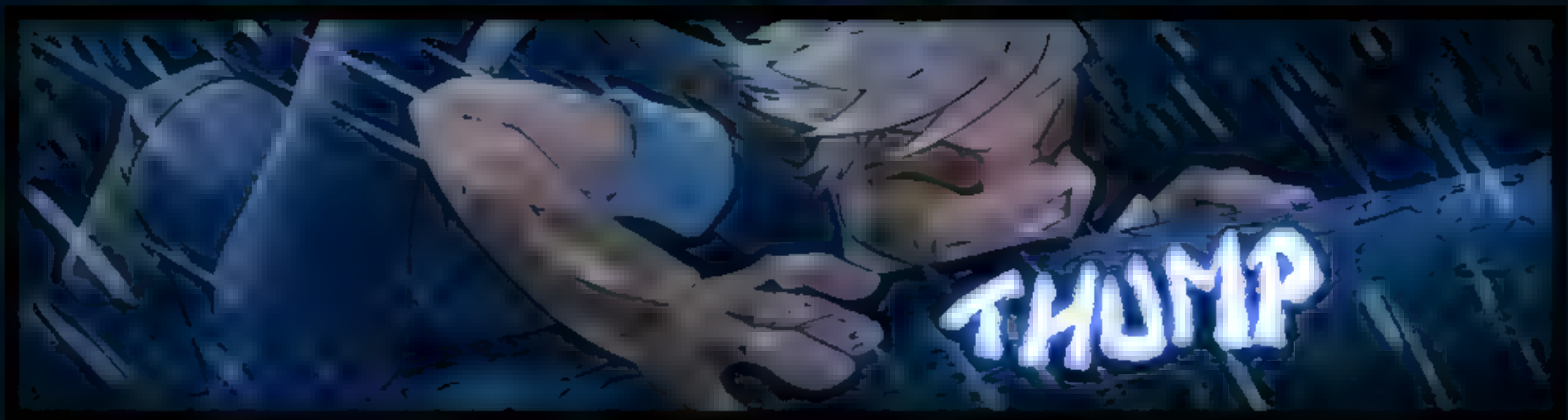


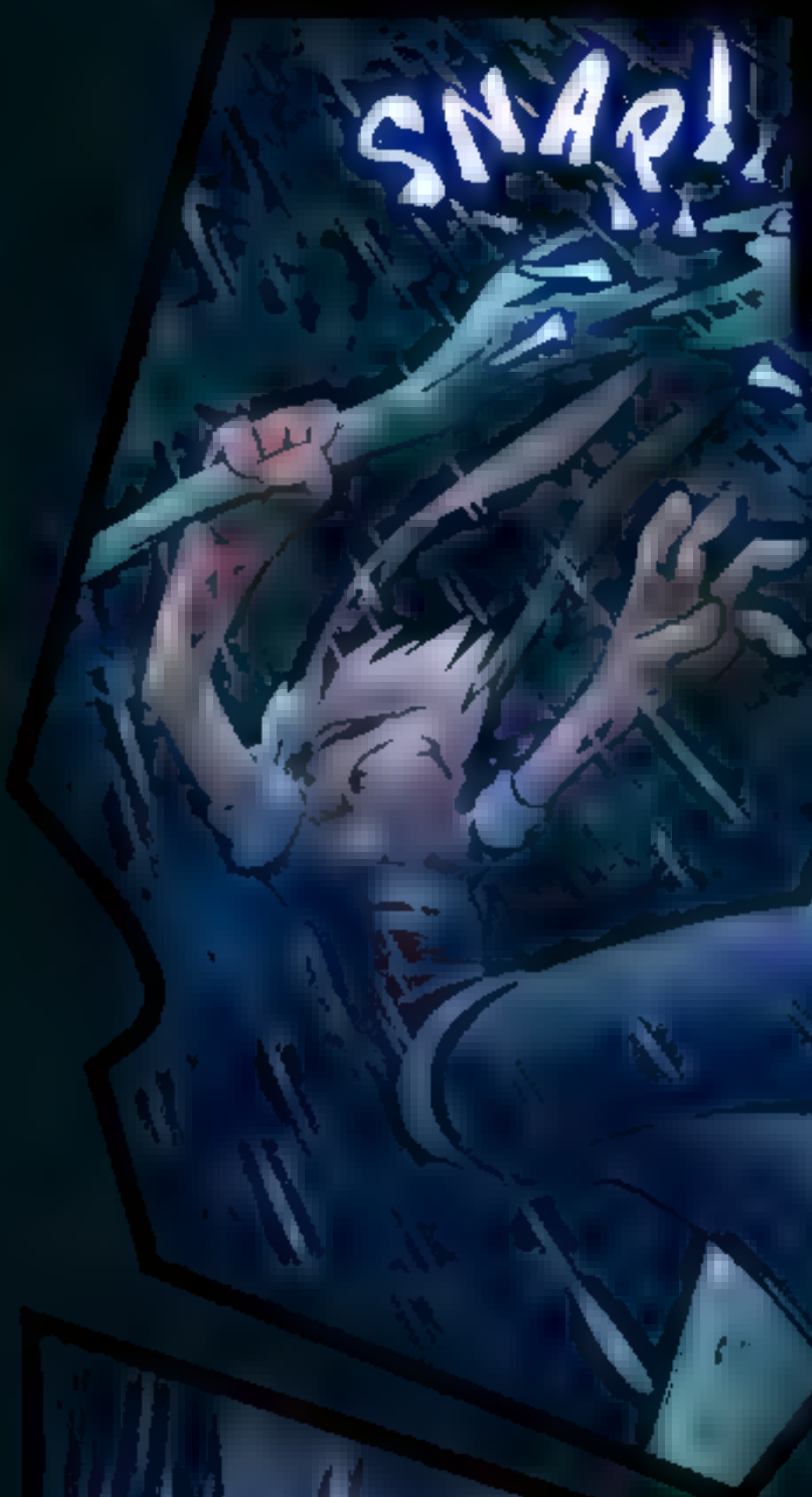
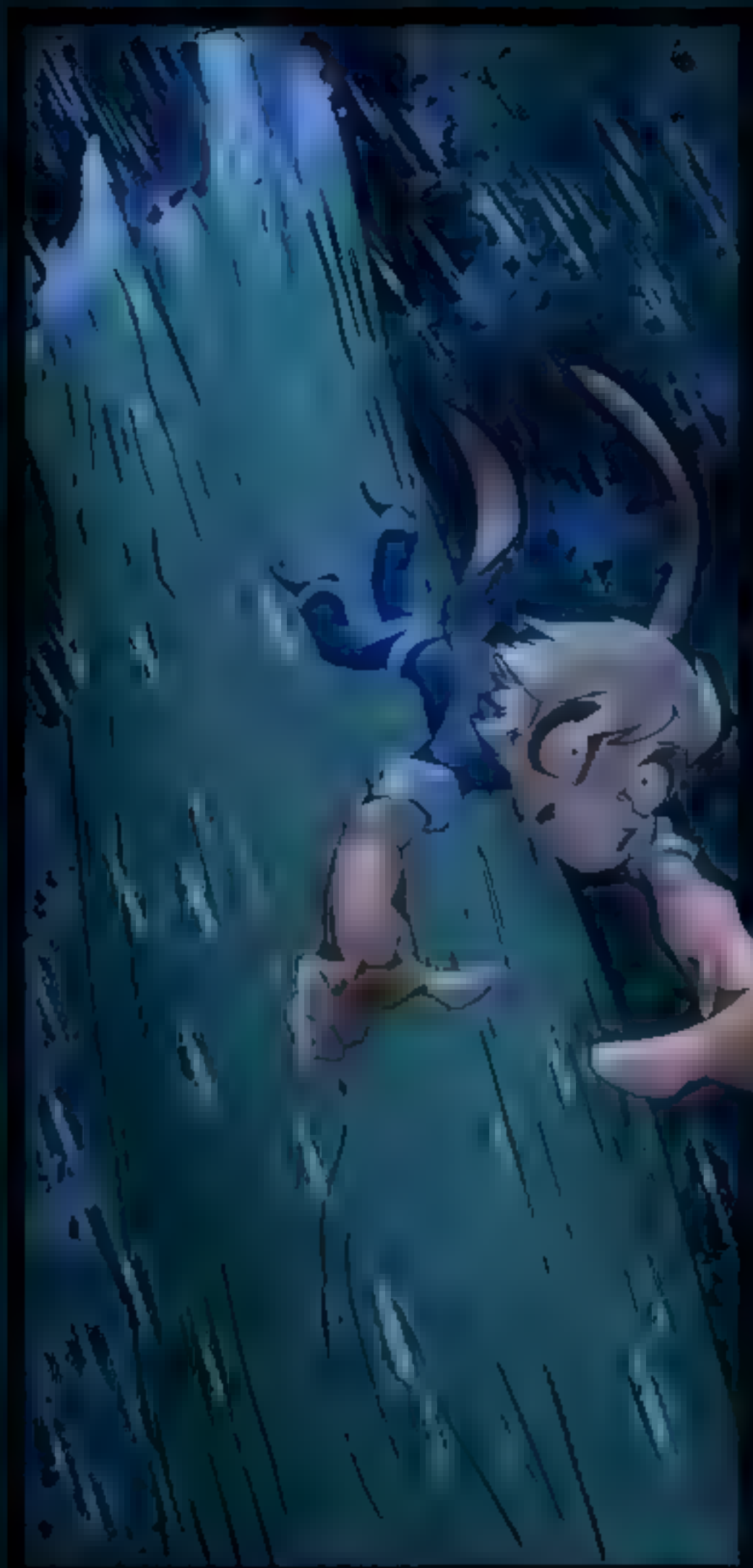






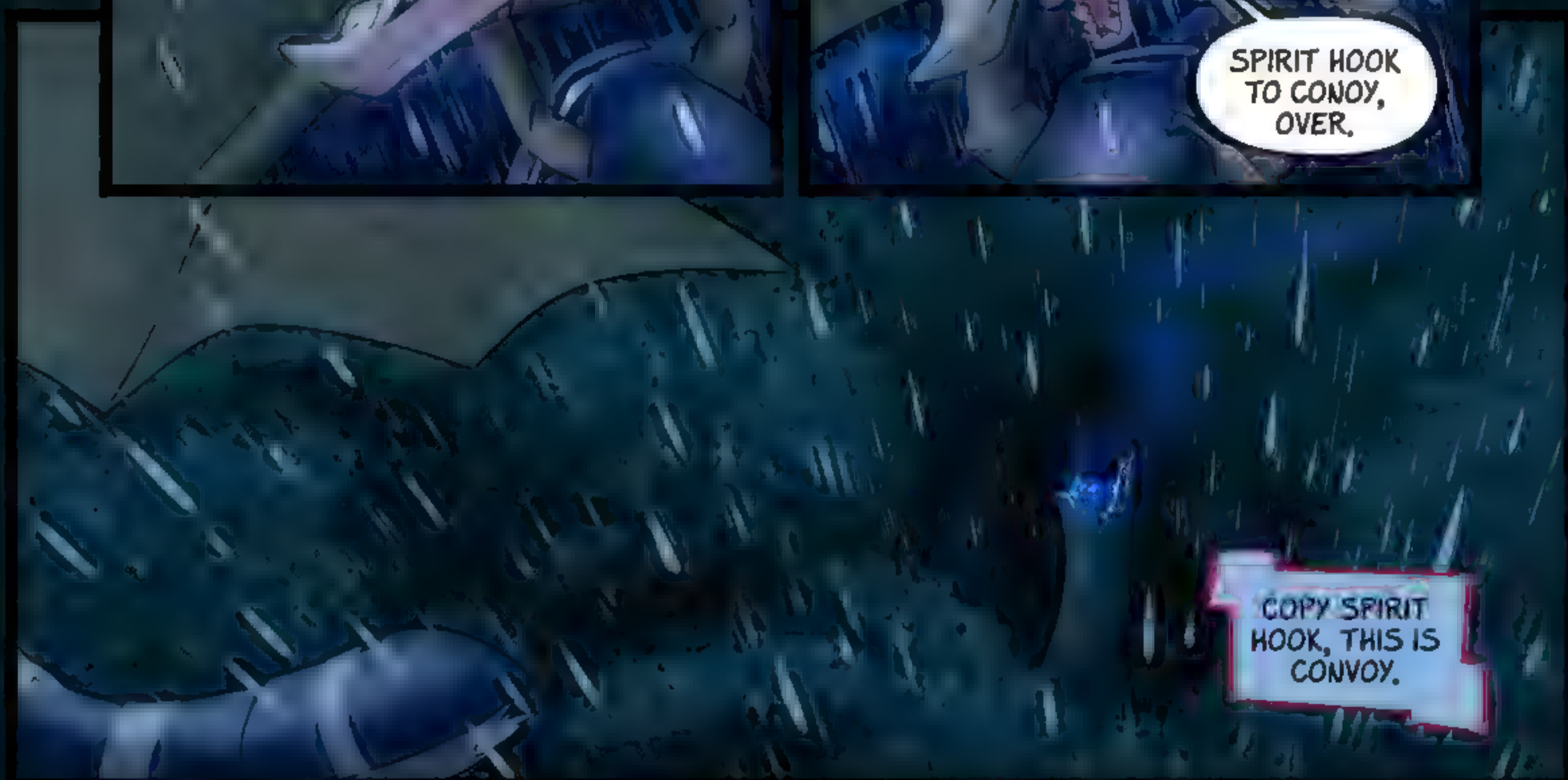




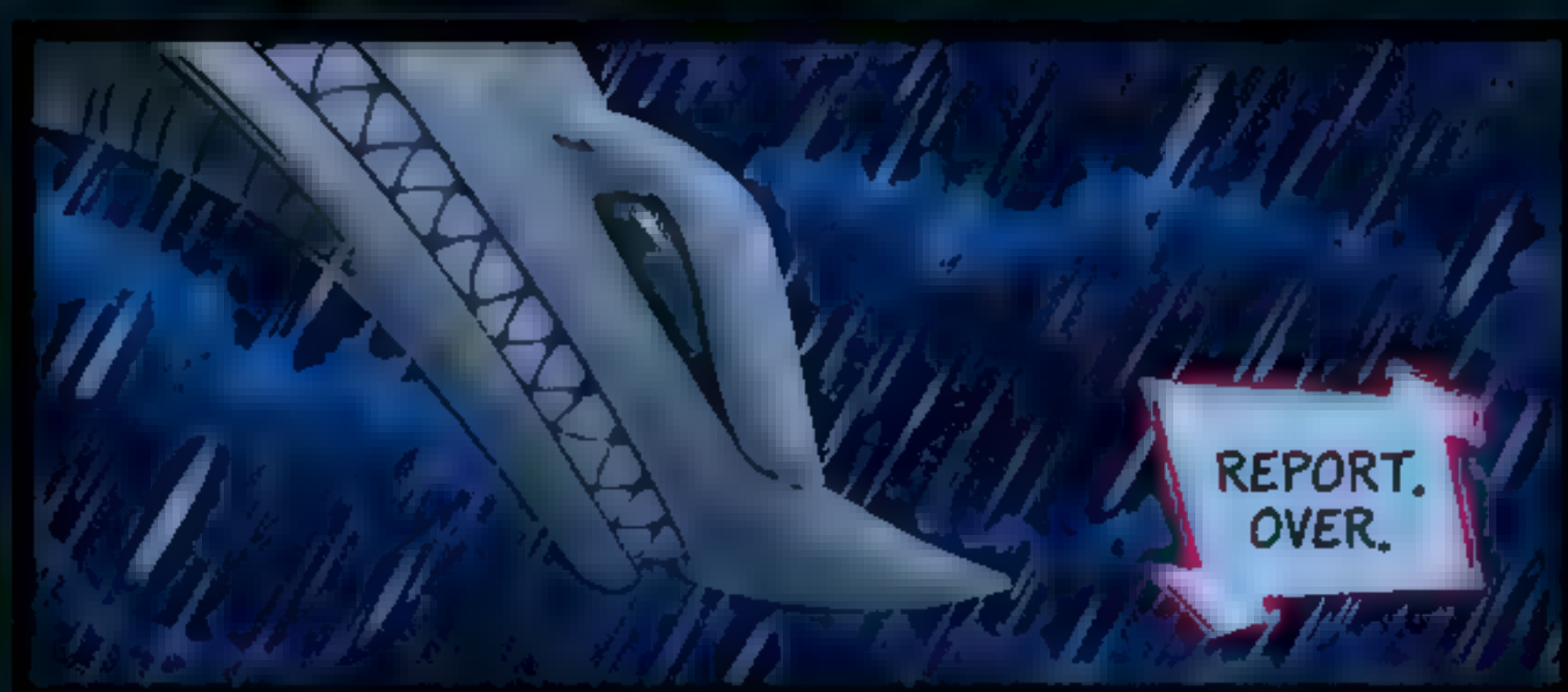




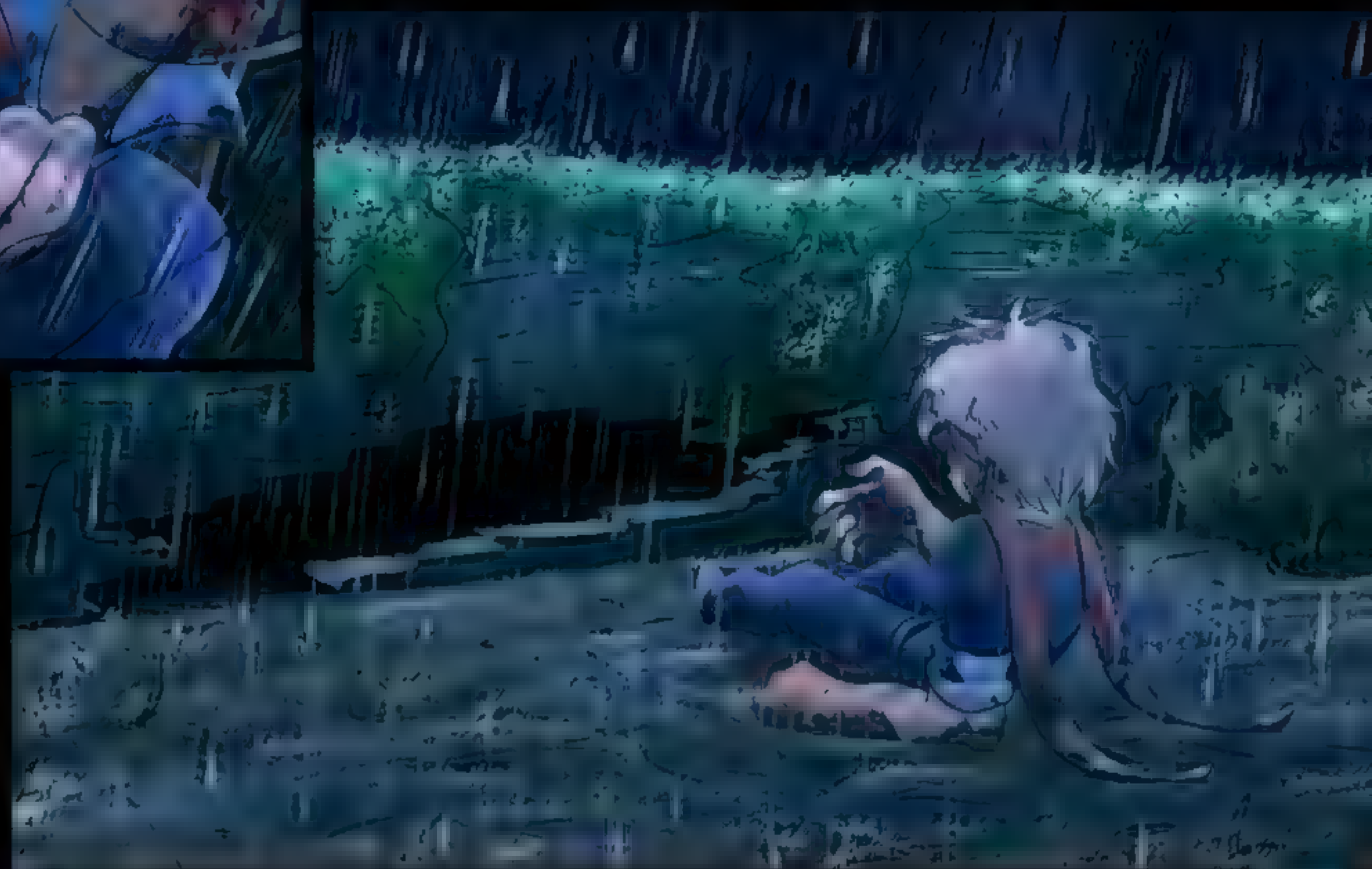
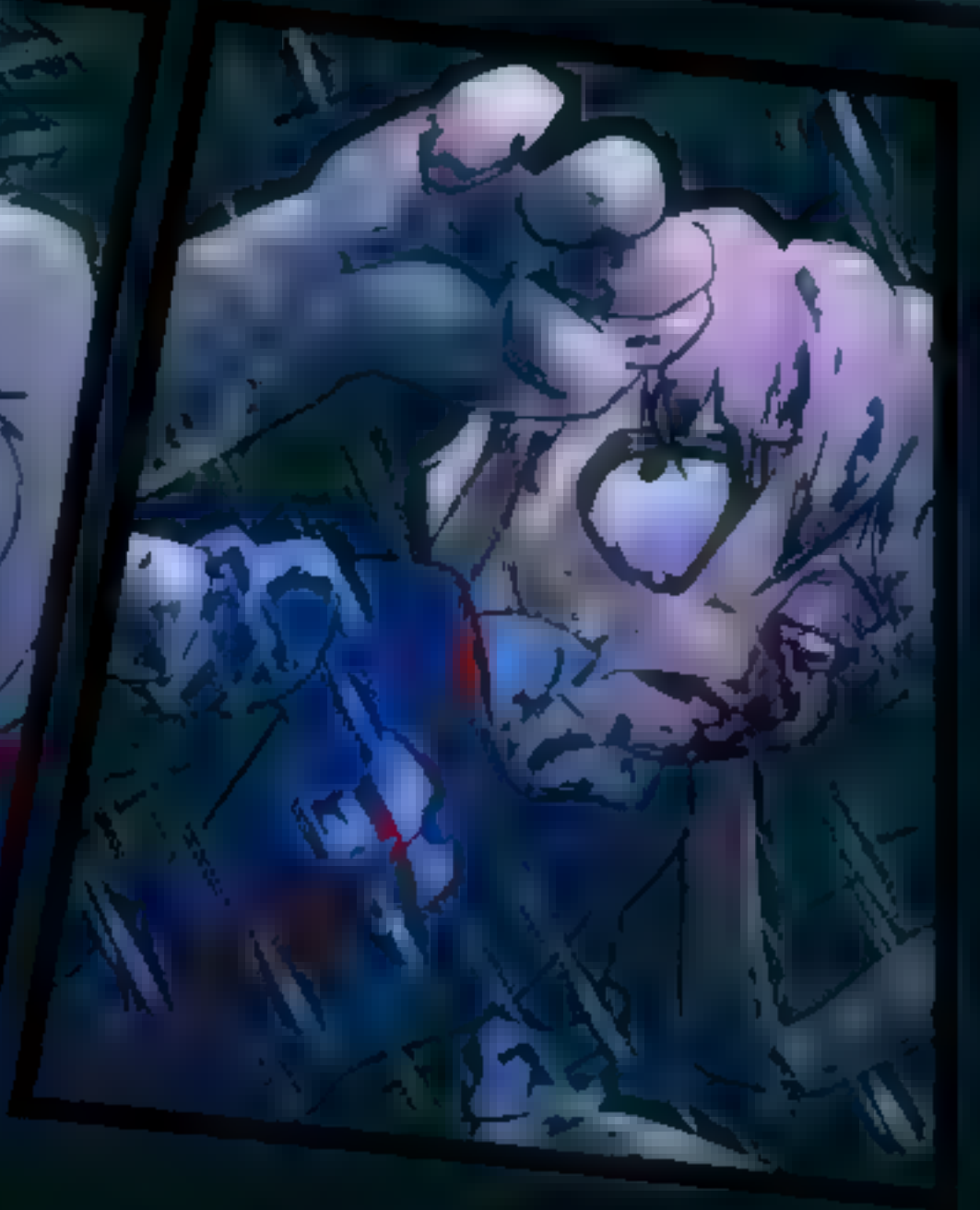
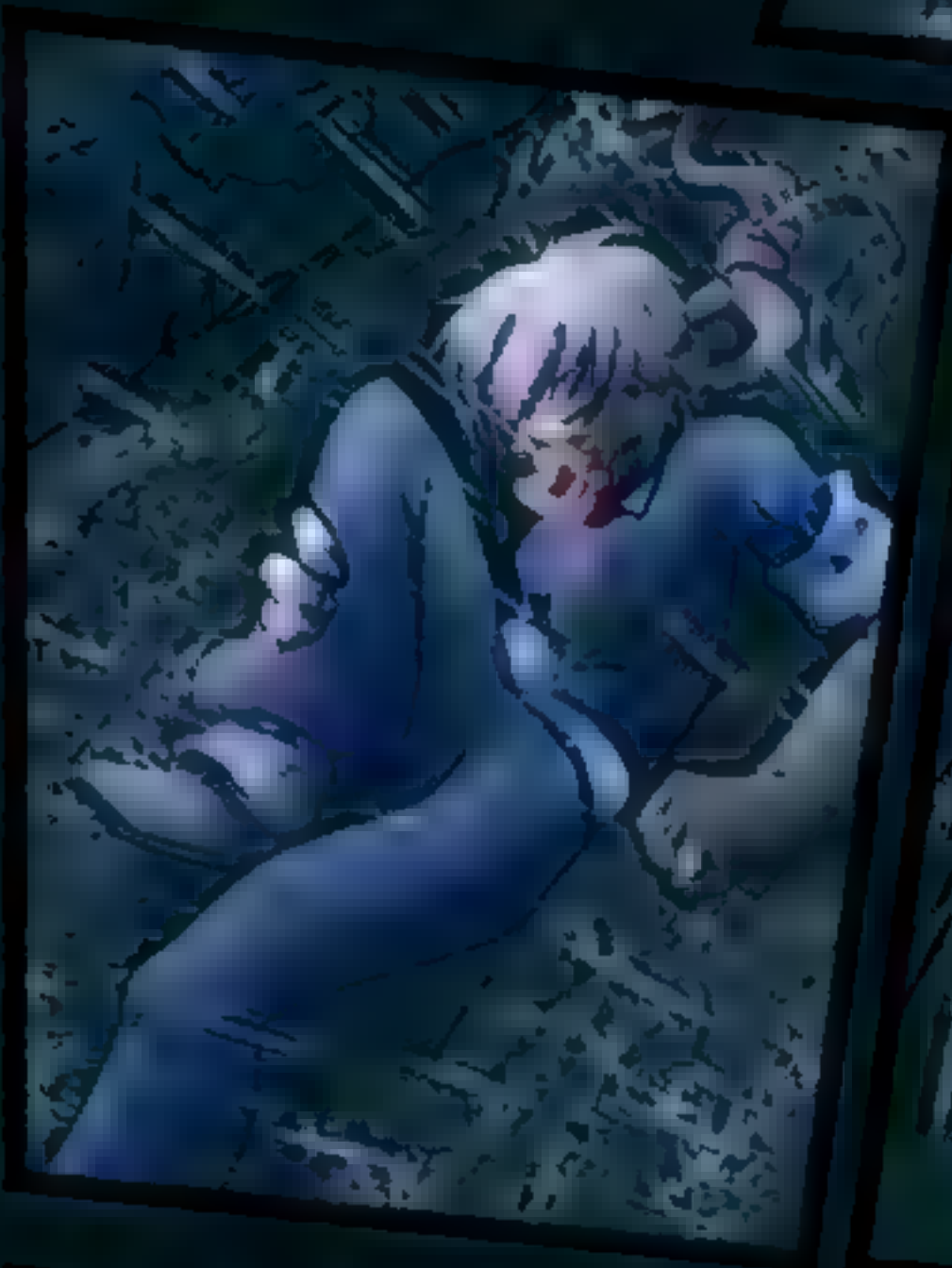
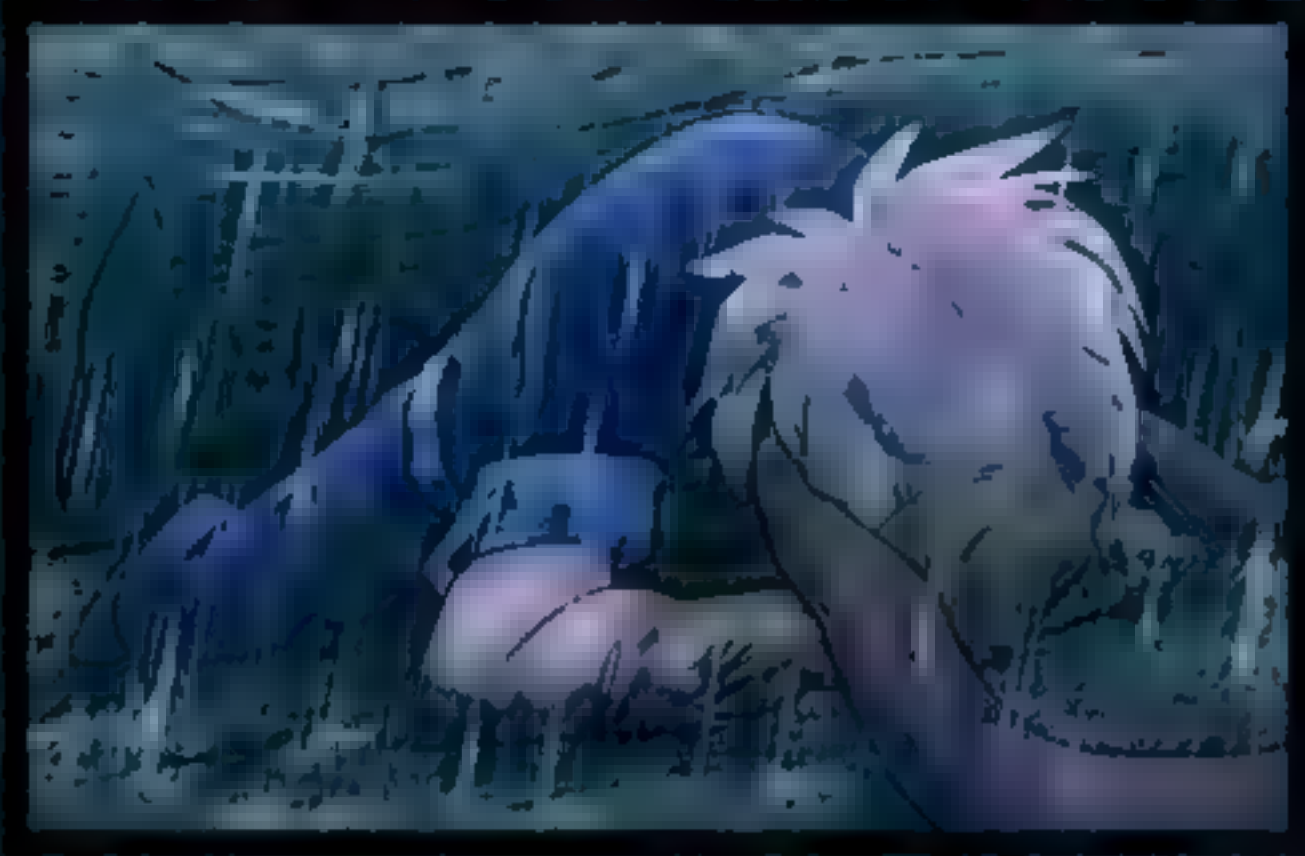
SPIRIT HOOK
TO CONVOY,
OVER.

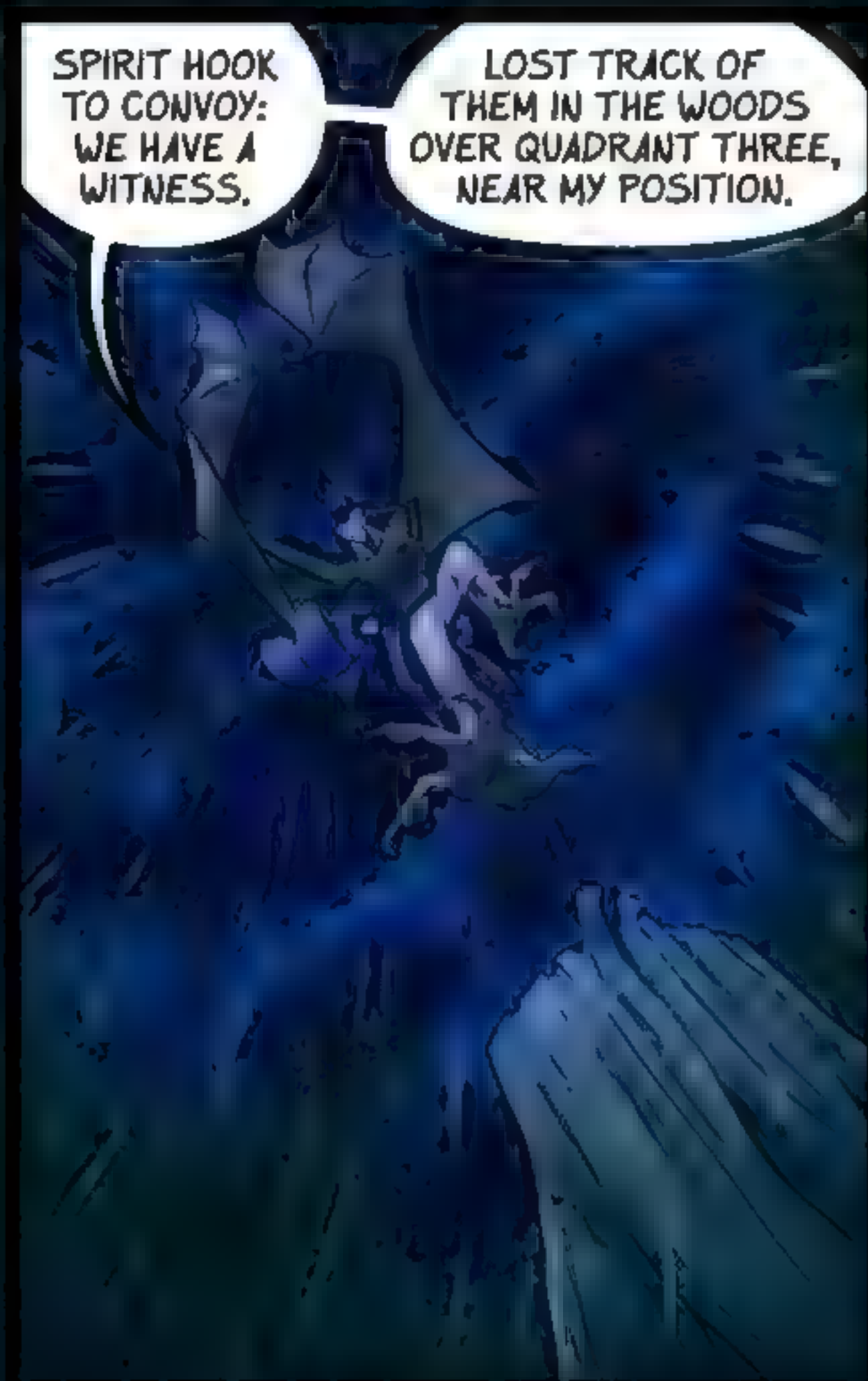


COPY SPIRIT
HOOK, THIS IS
CONVOY.



REPORT.
OVER.



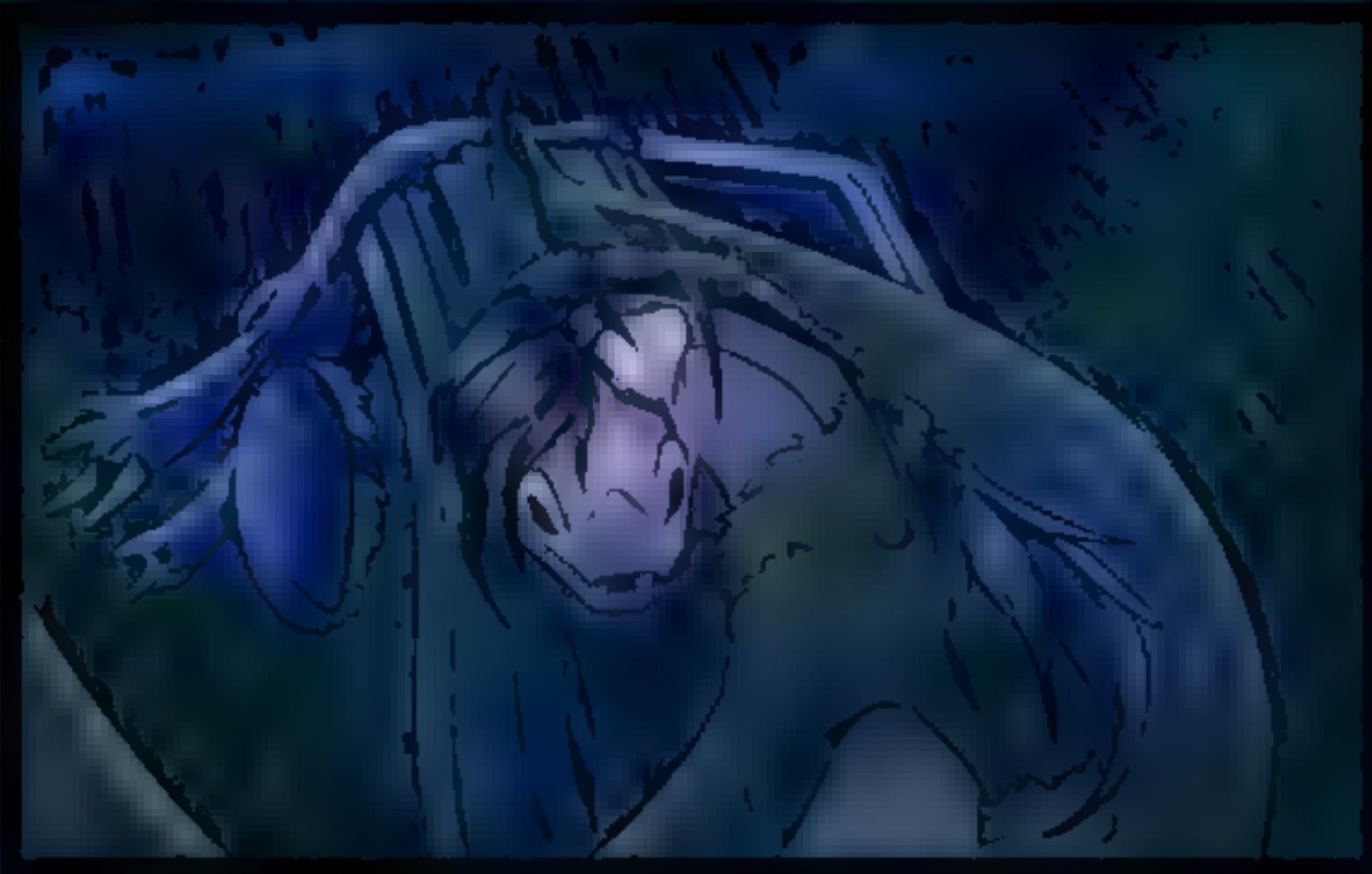
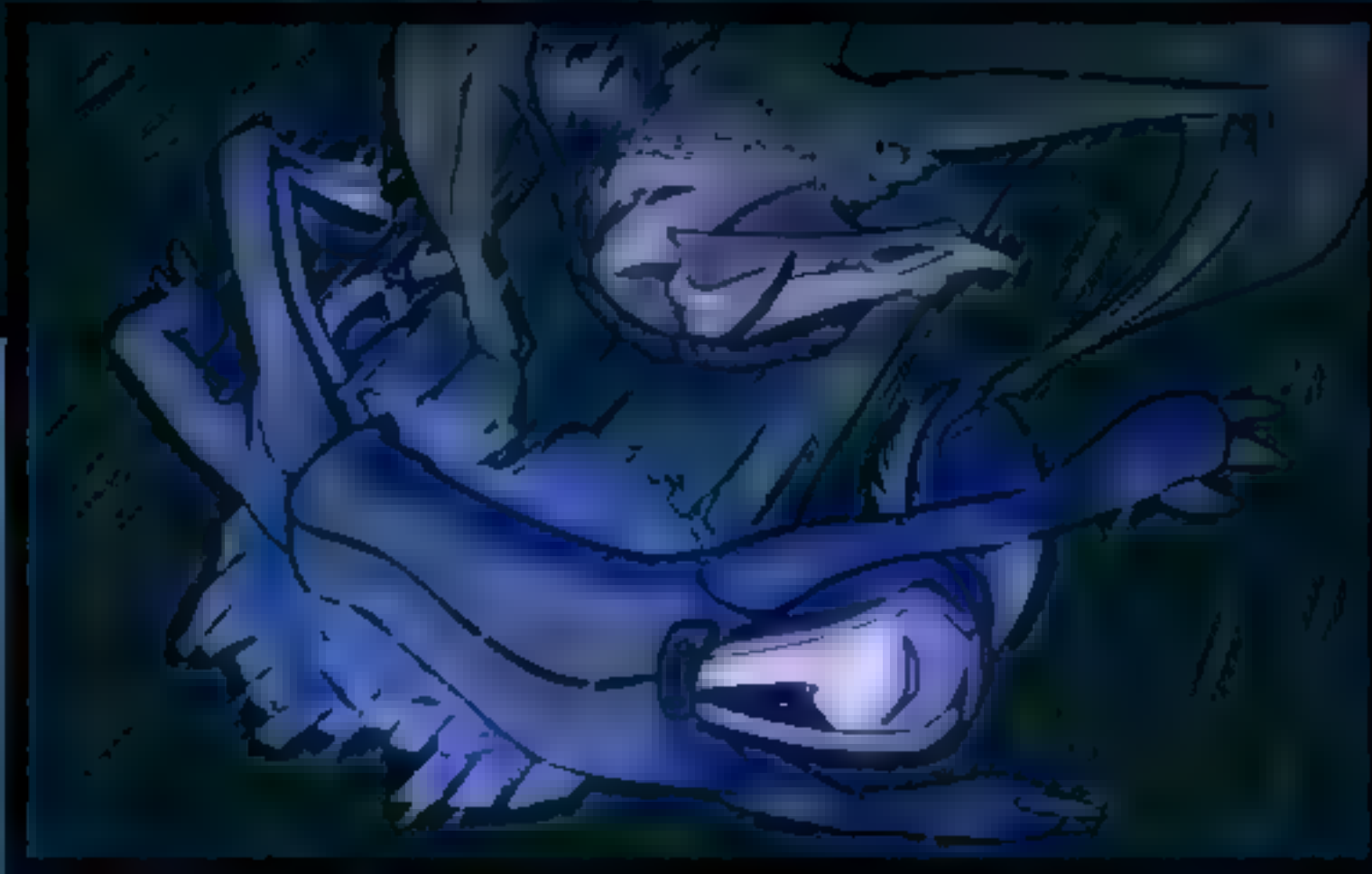


SPIRIT HOOK
TO CONVOY:
WE HAVE A
WITNESS.

LOST TRACK OF
THEM IN THE WOODS
OVER QUADRANT THREE,
NEAR MY POSITION.



BE ADVISED--
THEY'RE THROWING
AROUND **MAGICAL
BLUE BULLSHIT**
WITHOUT THE
USE OF RINGS.



REPEAT: WITNESS
USES OFFENSIVE
KHEN-RHO **WITHOUT
RINGS.** OVER.



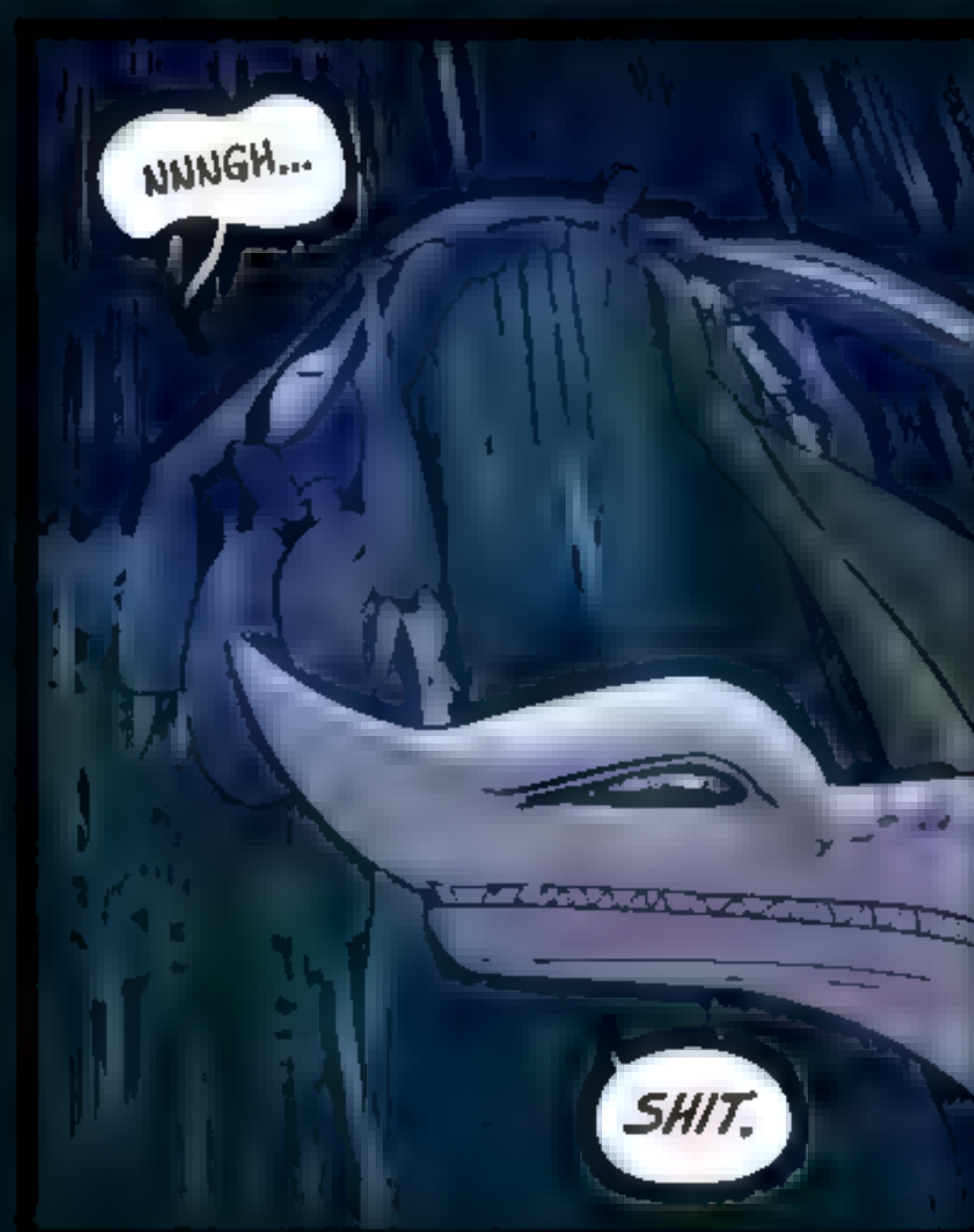


CONVOY TO
SPIRIT HOOK:
SITUATION LOGGED.
WE HAVE YOUR
POSITION.

AGENT *BACK DOOR*
WILL TAKE IT FROM
HERE. PROCEED WITH
YOUR OBJECTIVE.

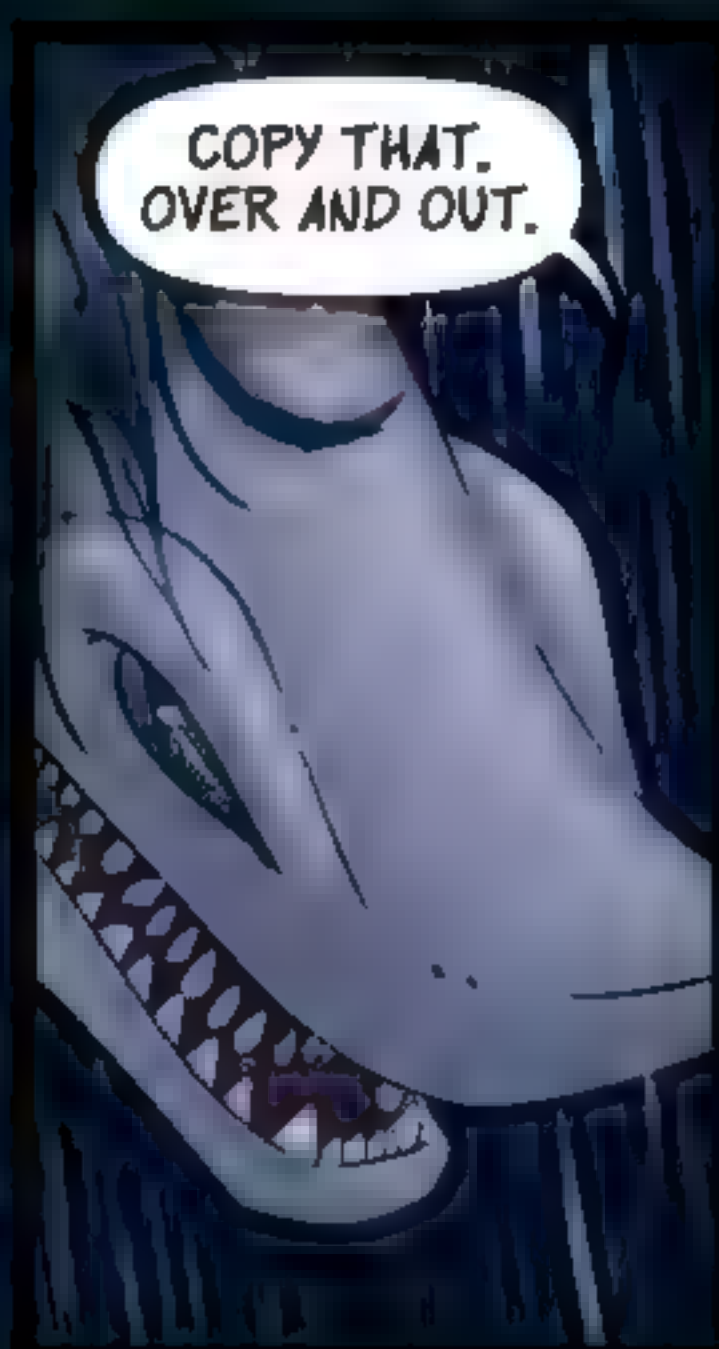
OVER.

WAIT, WHAT?
SPIRIT HOOK TO
CONVOY, I--



NNNGH...

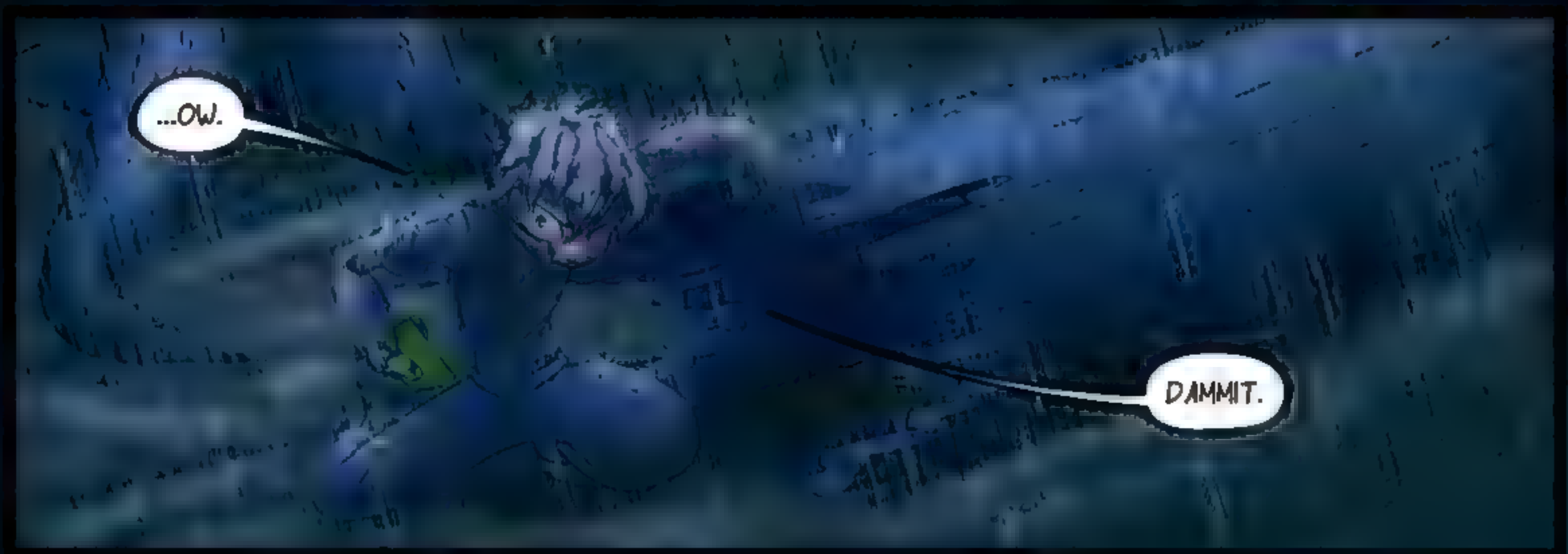
SHIT.



COPY THAT.
OVER AND OUT.

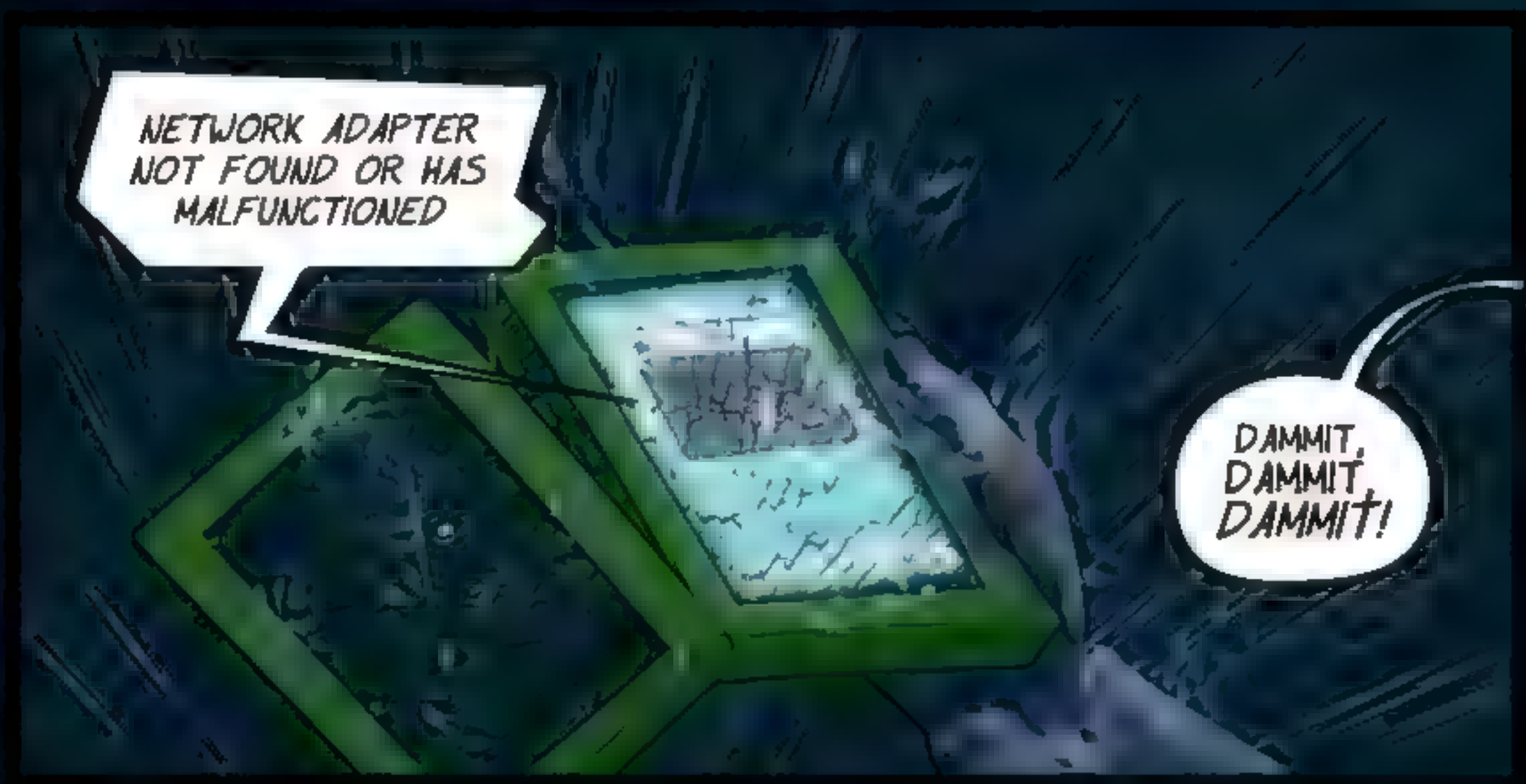


TIME TO
GET HELP.



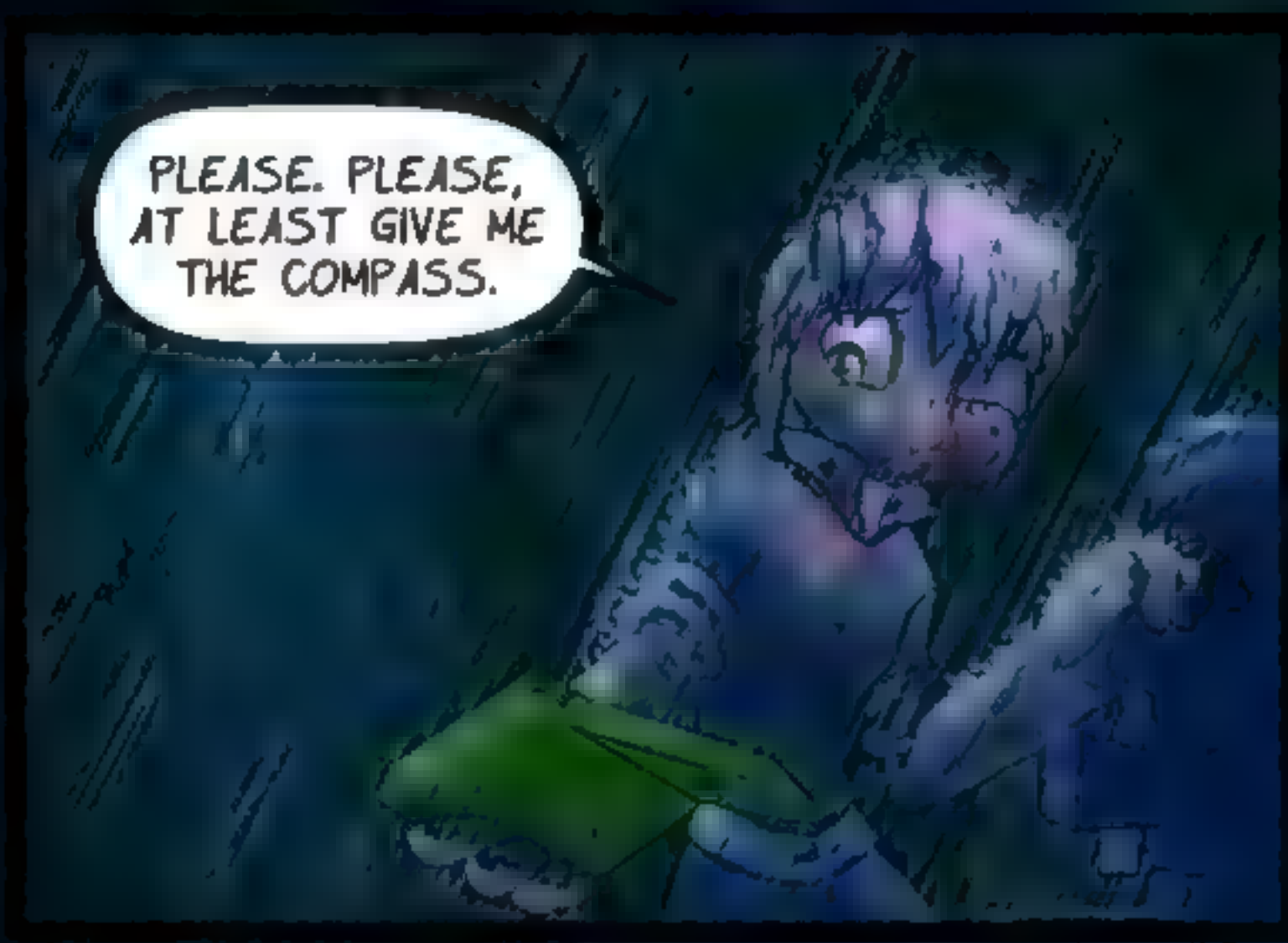
...OW.

DAMMIT.



NETWORK ADAPTER
NOT FOUND OR HAS
MALFUNCTIONED

DAMMIT,
DAMMIT
DAMMIT!



PLEASE. PLEASE,
AT LEAST GIVE ME
THE COMPASS.



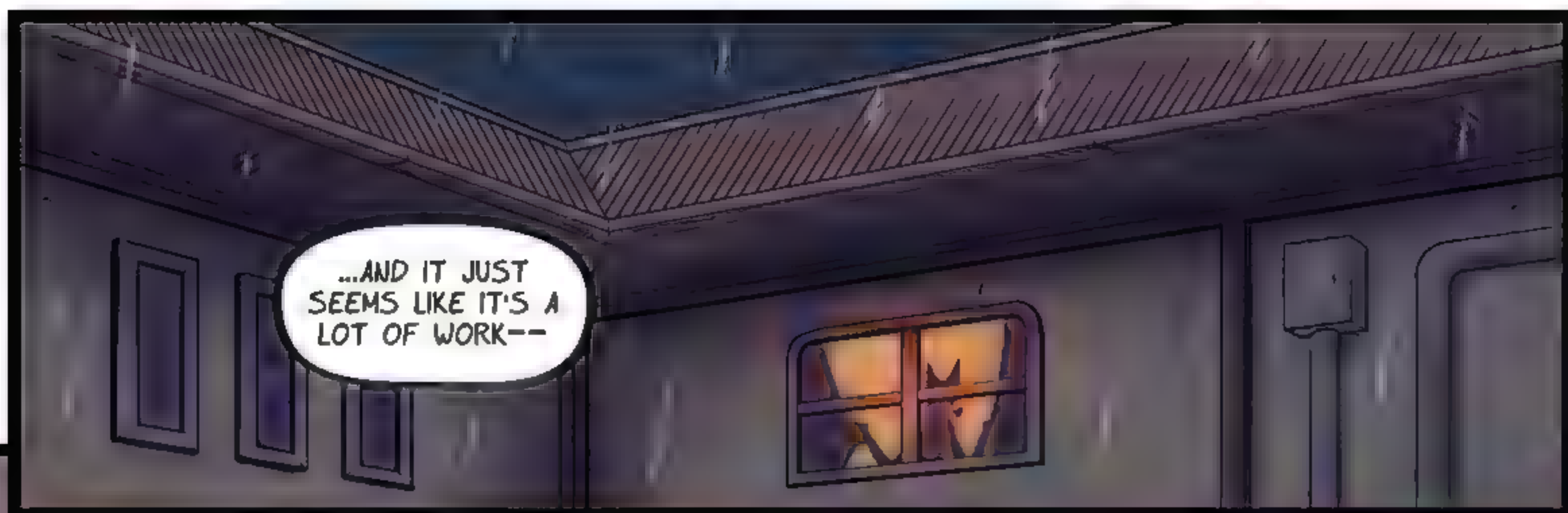
YES!



OKAY.

DON'T WORRY,
FALLAN. HANG
IN THERE.

I'M COMING
FOR YOU.



...AND IT JUST
SEEMS LIKE IT'S A
LOT OF WORK--

--SO I'M GLAD
THINGS HAVE BEEN
WORKING OUT.

OH, THEY MOST
DEFINITELY HAVE.
THIS IS THE... I
THINK *SEVENTH*
SCHOOL I'VE BEEN
ASSIGNED TO?



AND IT'S BEEN THE
SMOOTHEST SETTLE-IN
TRANSITION BY A
LONG SHOT.

OH, SURE,
THERE'VE BEEN
SOME NOTES HERE
AND THERE--

--BUT NOTHING
THAT CAN'T BE
TAKEN CARE OF.

AL STREAMLINED
EVERYTHING SO MUCH--
HONESTLY, I HAVE NO IDEA
HOW I EVER MANAGED
WITHOUT HER!

SHE'S GOT
A REAL GIFT FOR
ADMINISTRATION. I'VE
BEEN THINKING OF WHO
MIGHT APPRECIATE HER
SKILLS ONCE SHE
GRADUATES.

HAH!
CLASSIC
ALLIE.





...?



OH! HEH HEH... RIGHT YOU ARE, MA'AM. SORRY, I'VE GOT THE MEMORY CAPACITY OF A SUGAR-FLY.

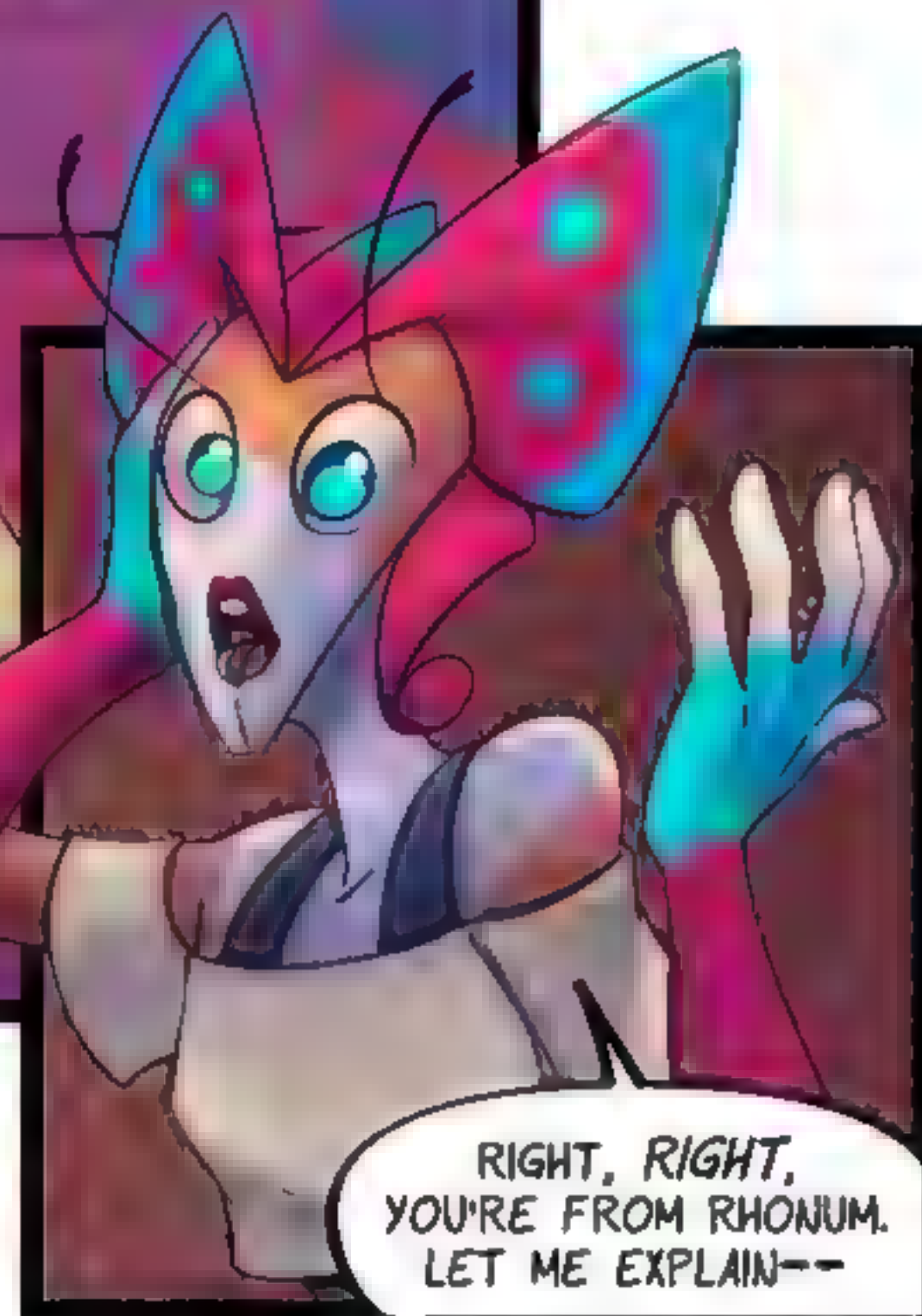
YOU KNOW, I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY SHE MAKES SUCH A BIG DEAL OVER ONE ITTY-BITTY SYLLABLE.

"ALLIS" IS SUCH A PRETTY NAME! WHY--



FOR GOODNESS' SAKE, ZHAZE, WHAT DO YOU MEAN **WHY?**

THAT'S LIKE SAYING YOU DON'T--
...OOOHH, WAIT.



RIGHT, RIGHT, YOU'RE FROM RHONUM. LET ME EXPLAIN--

BACK IN KASTINA,
THINGS ARE... UM.

DIFFERENT.

FOR ONE THING,
PEOPLE'S NAMES TAG
THEM AS MALE OR FEMALE,
USING SUFFIXES.

"-LIS" IS
ONE OF THEM.
A FEMALE ONE.

THAT MAY NOT
BE VERY IMPORTANT
IN RHONUM, BUT IN
KASTINA, IT'S...

...LET'S SAY IT
MAKES CERTAIN DECISIONS
FOR YOU. AND IF YOU
DISAGREE WITH THEM,
THAT'S... WELL--

--THAT'S, UM,
DISAGREEABLE.

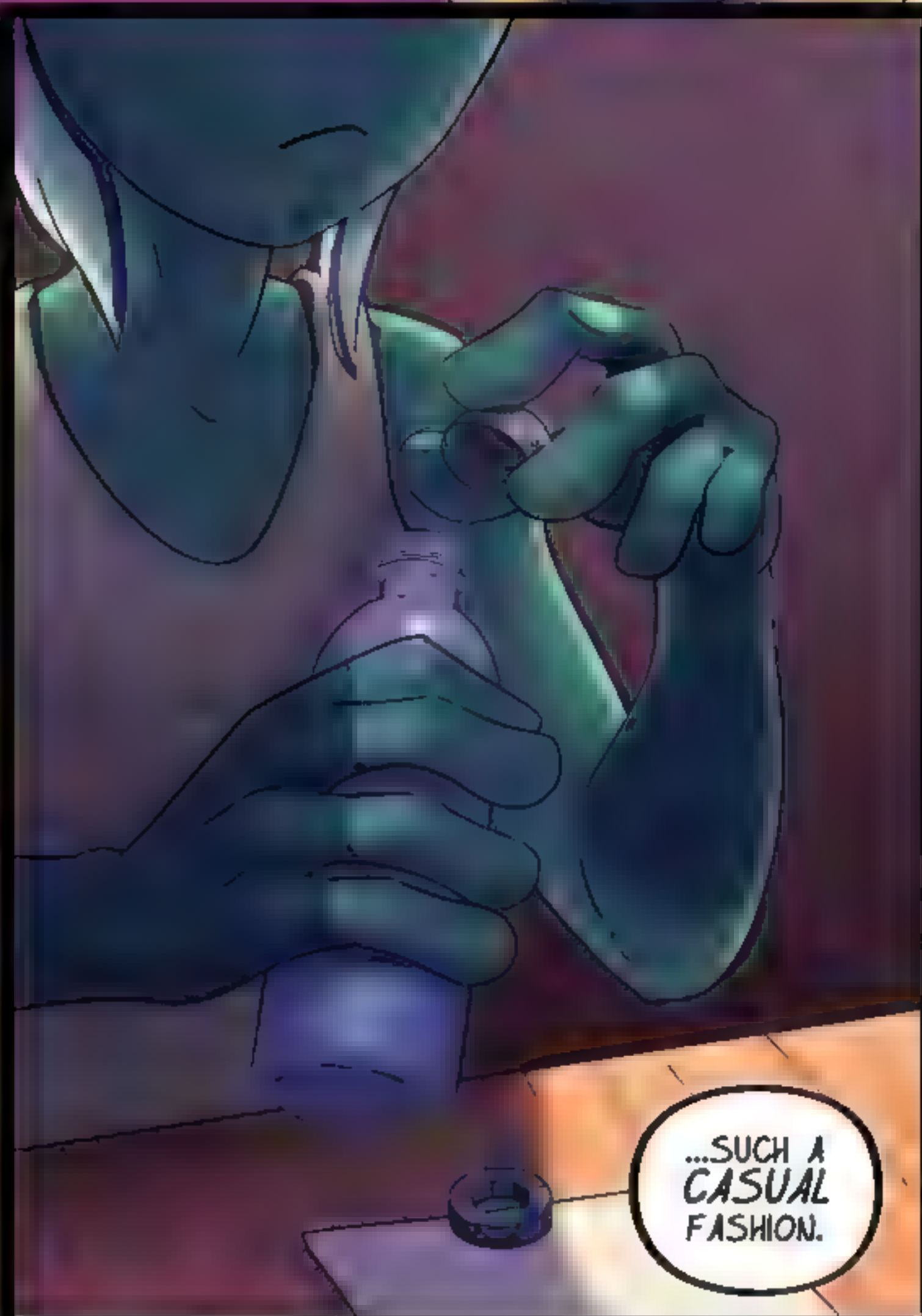
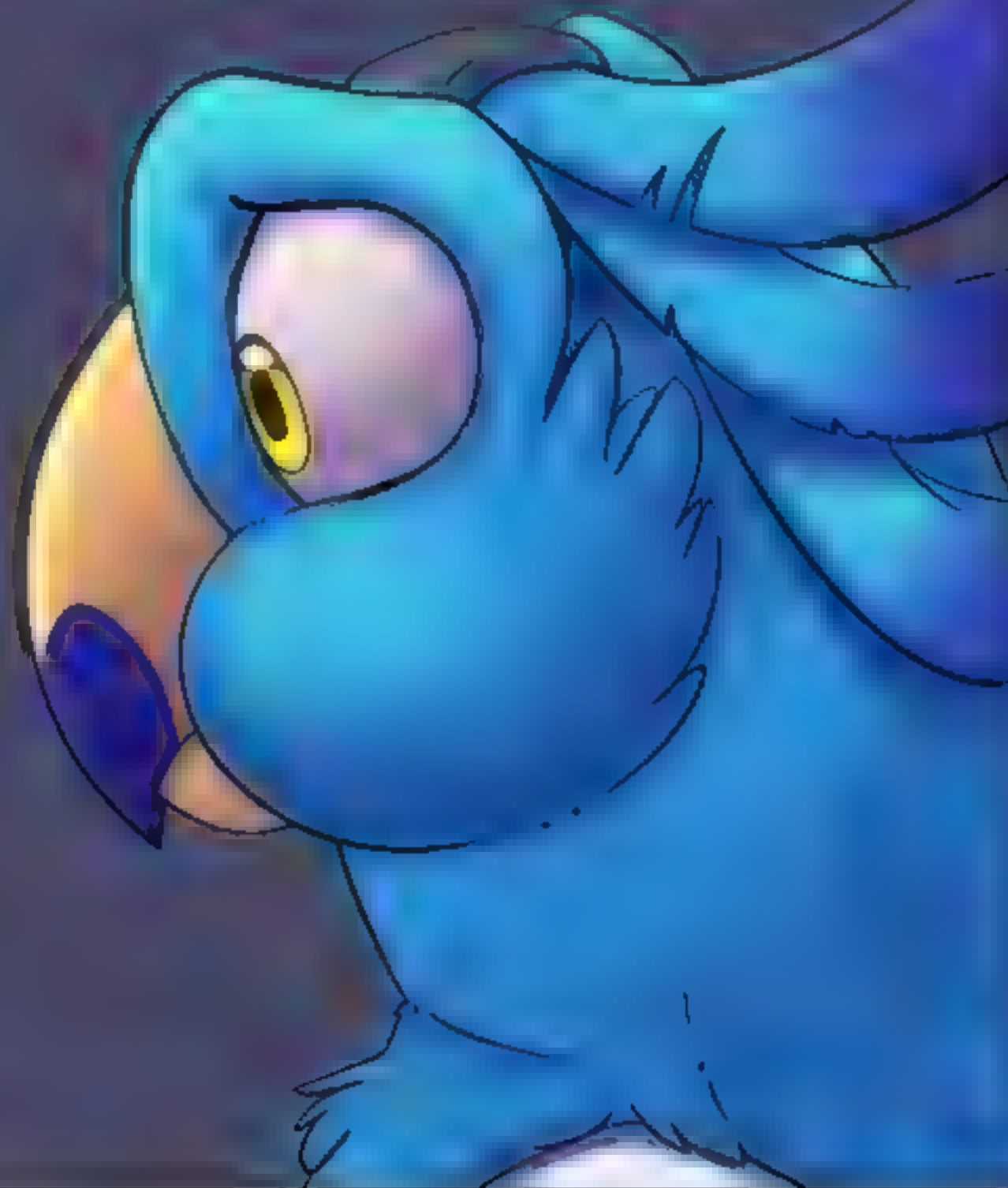
AND YET.

SHE CALLED
HERSELF "**AL**".



DO YOU
SEE WHAT
I MEAN?

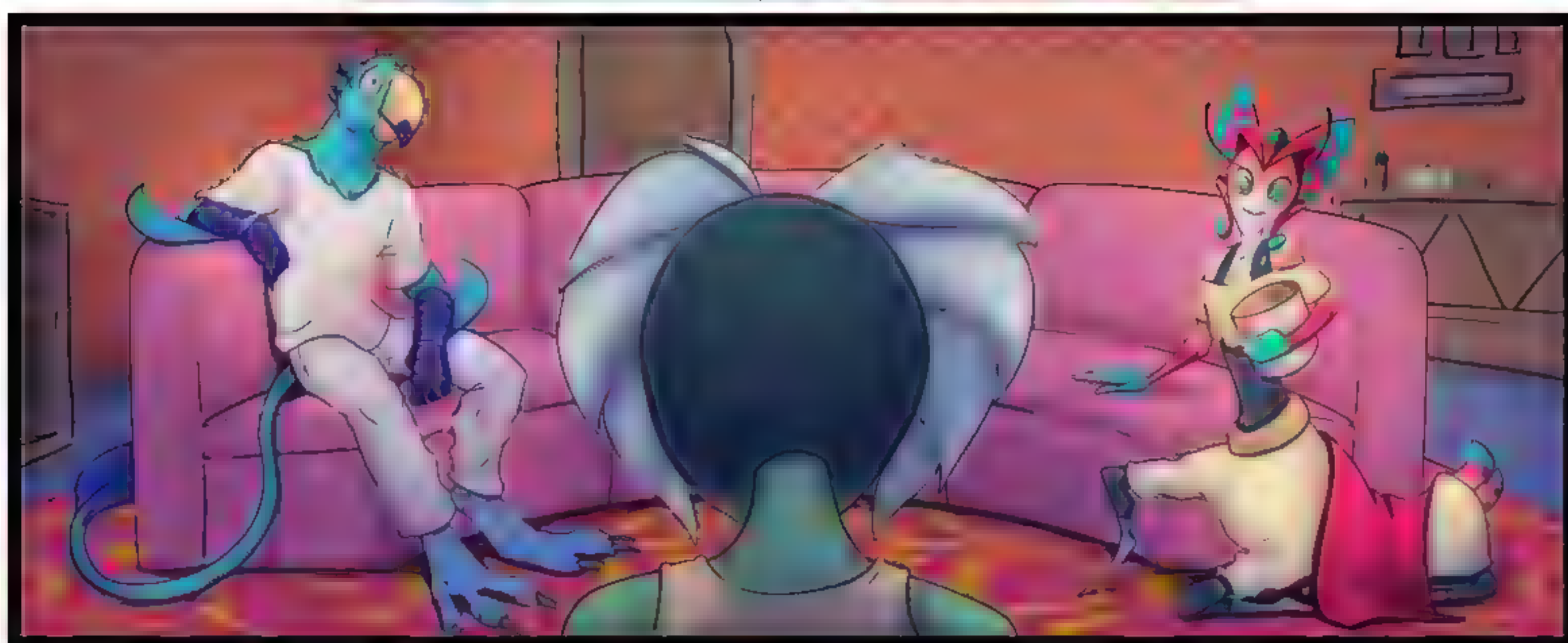
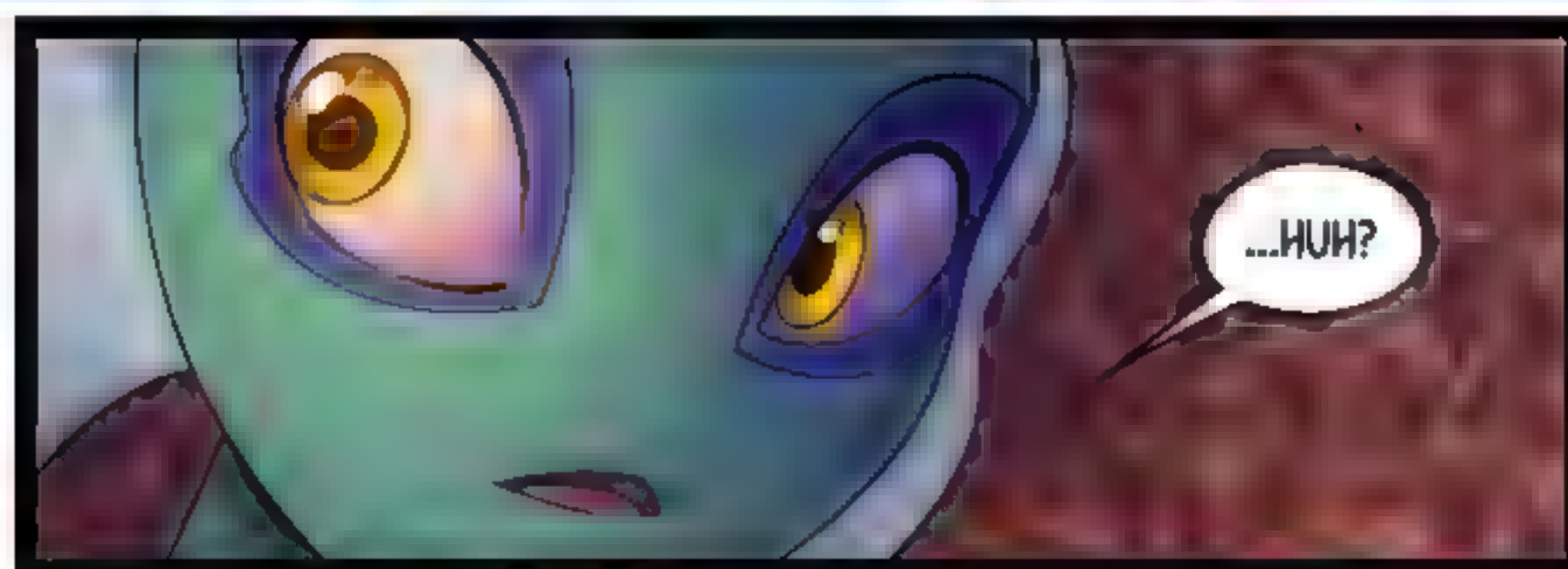
A CHOICE LIKE THAT
IS **VERY PERSONAL**, ZHAZE,
AND SHE LIKELY DOESN'T ENJOY
SEEING ONE OF HER VERY OWN
TEACHERS **DISREGARD**
IT IN SUCH A...

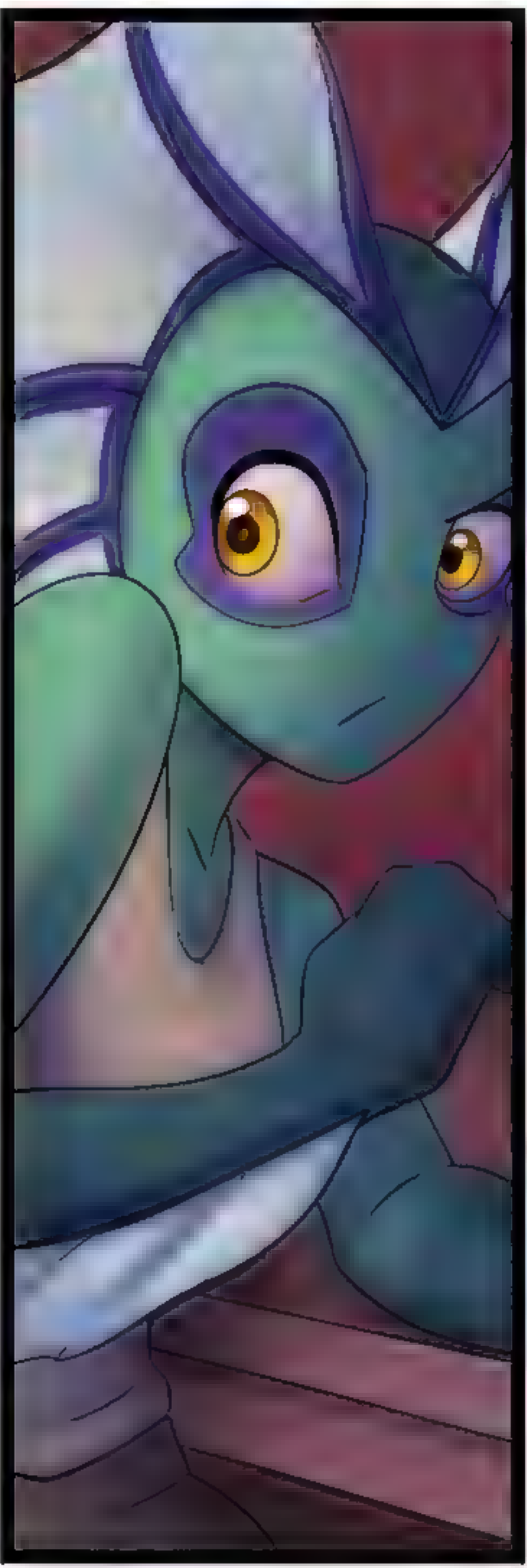
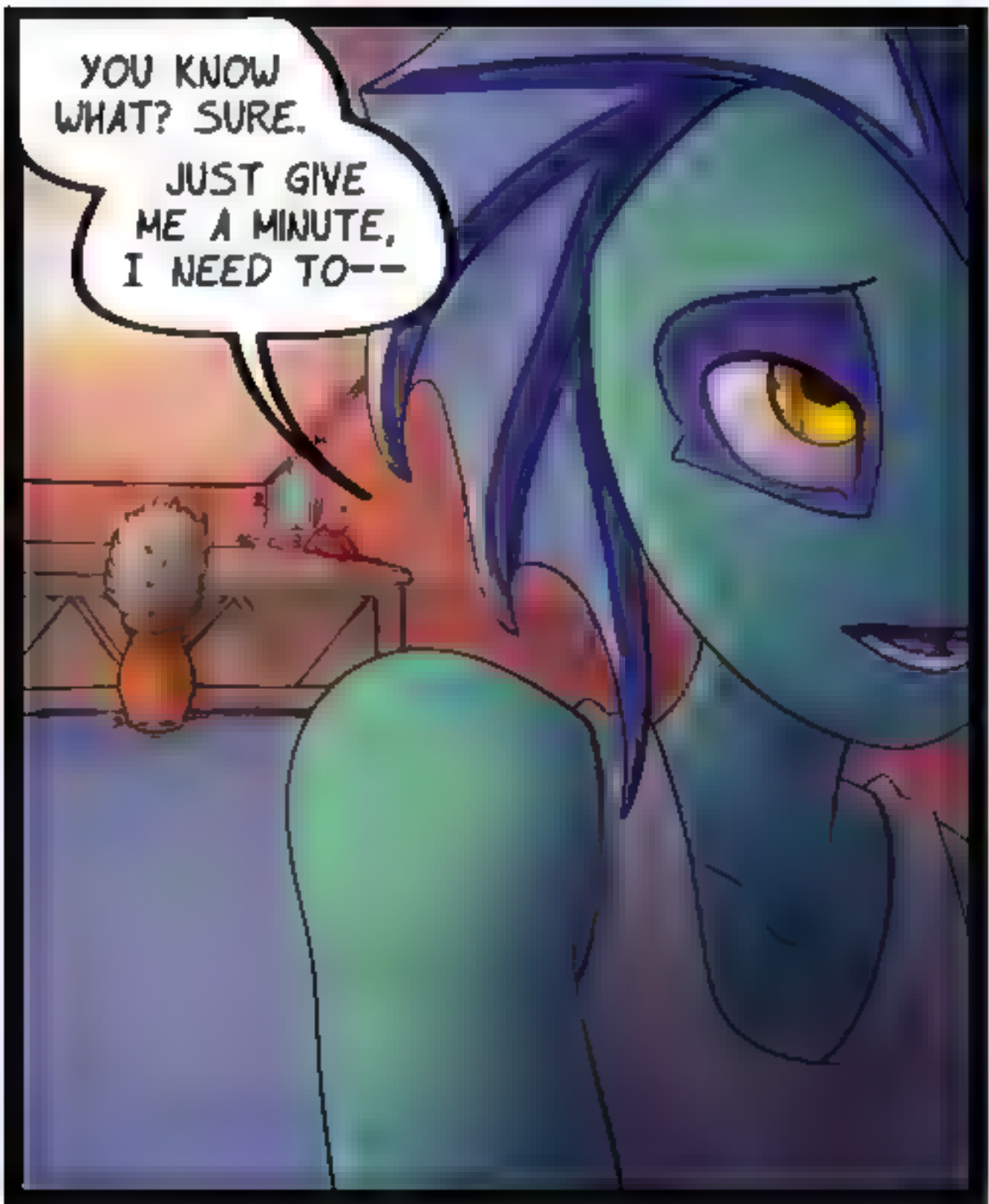


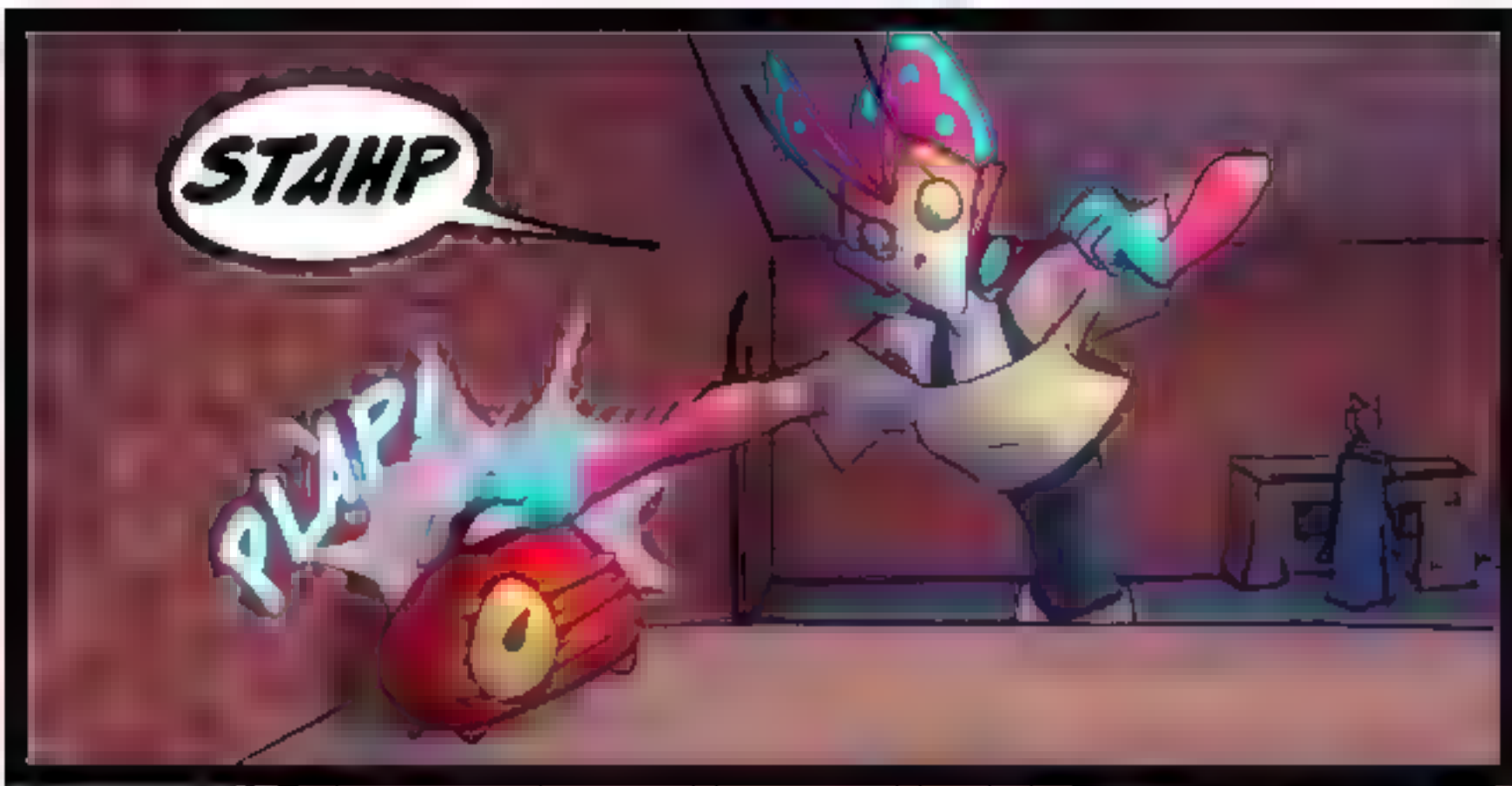
...SUCH A
CASUAL
FASHION.



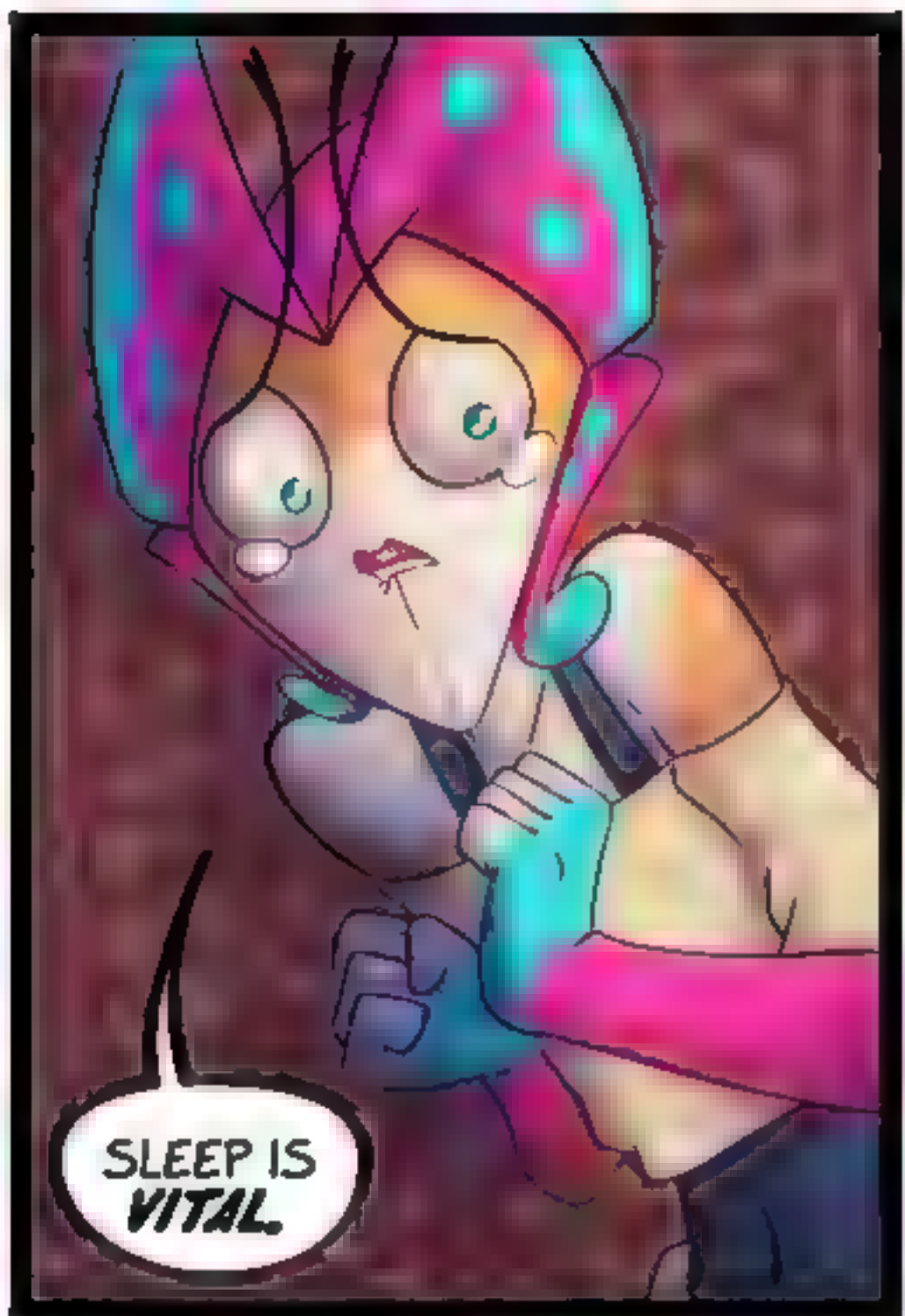
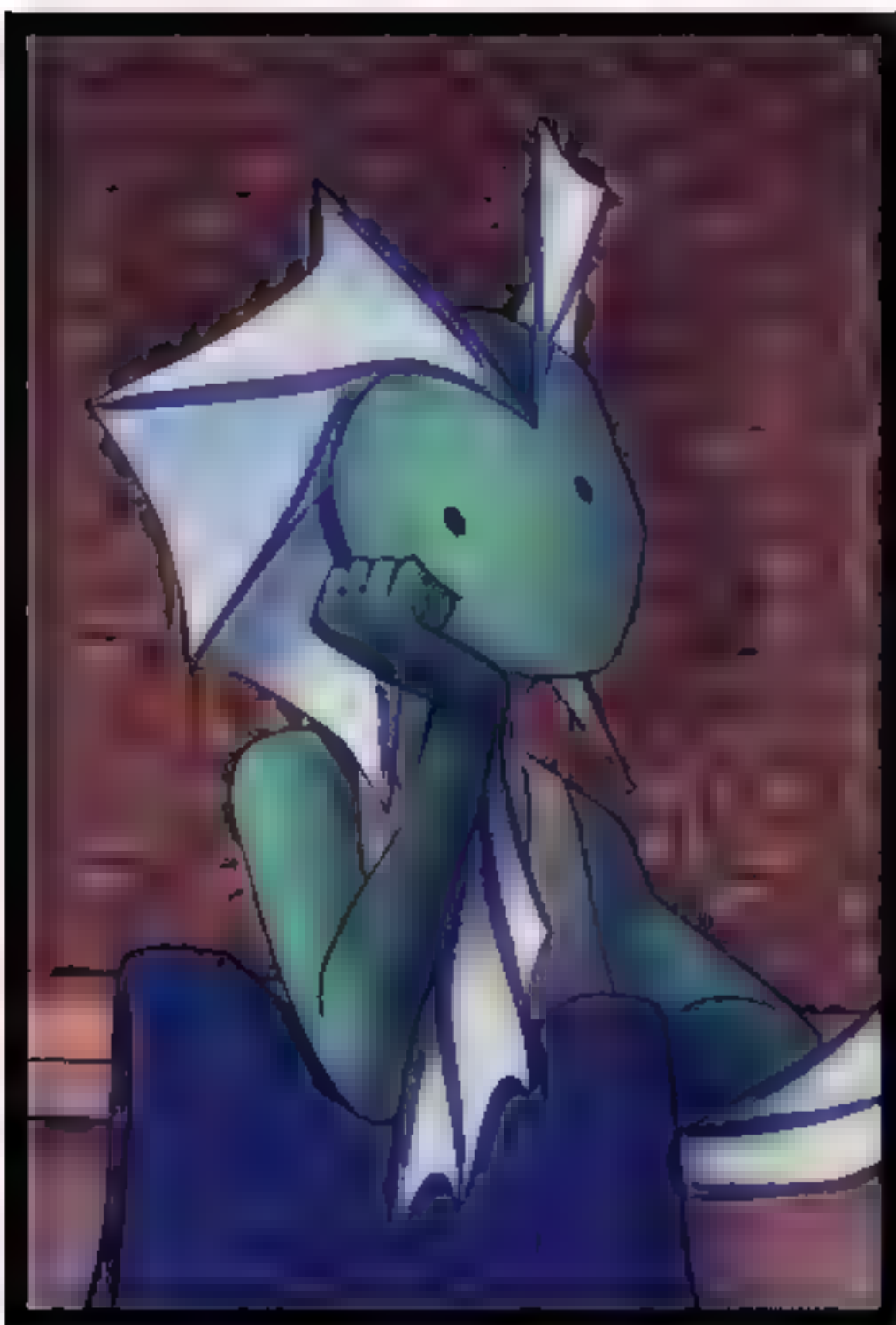


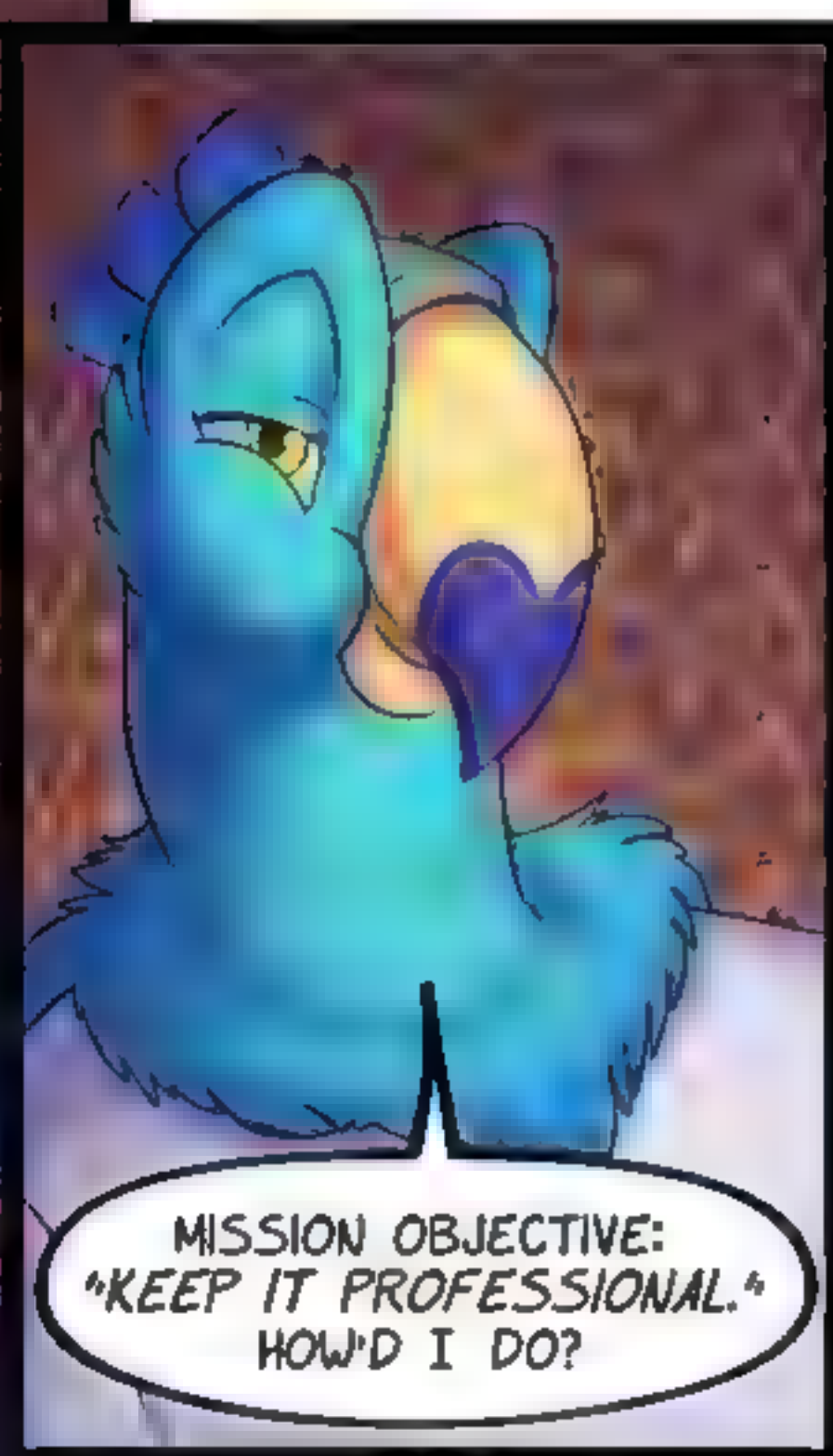
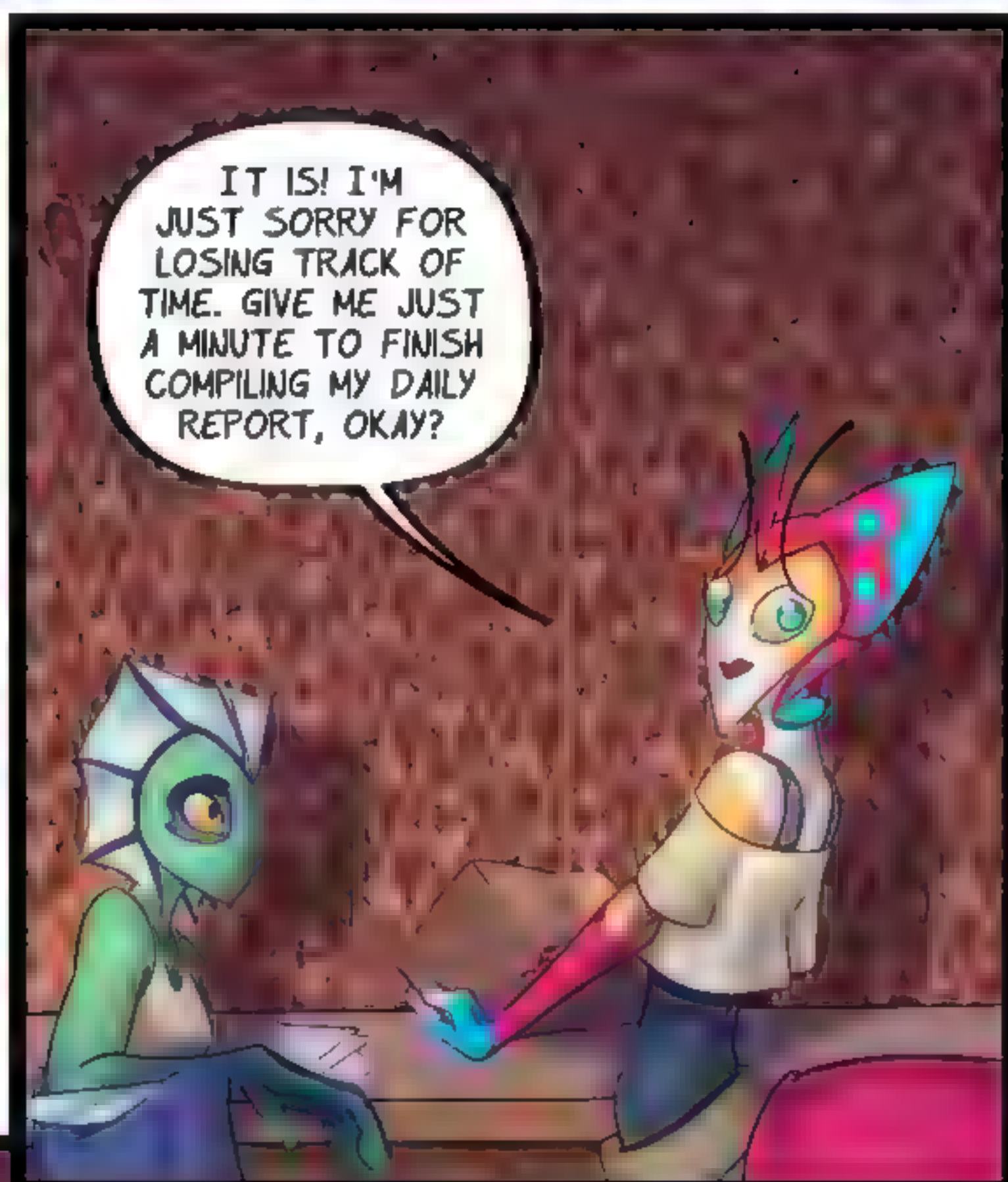


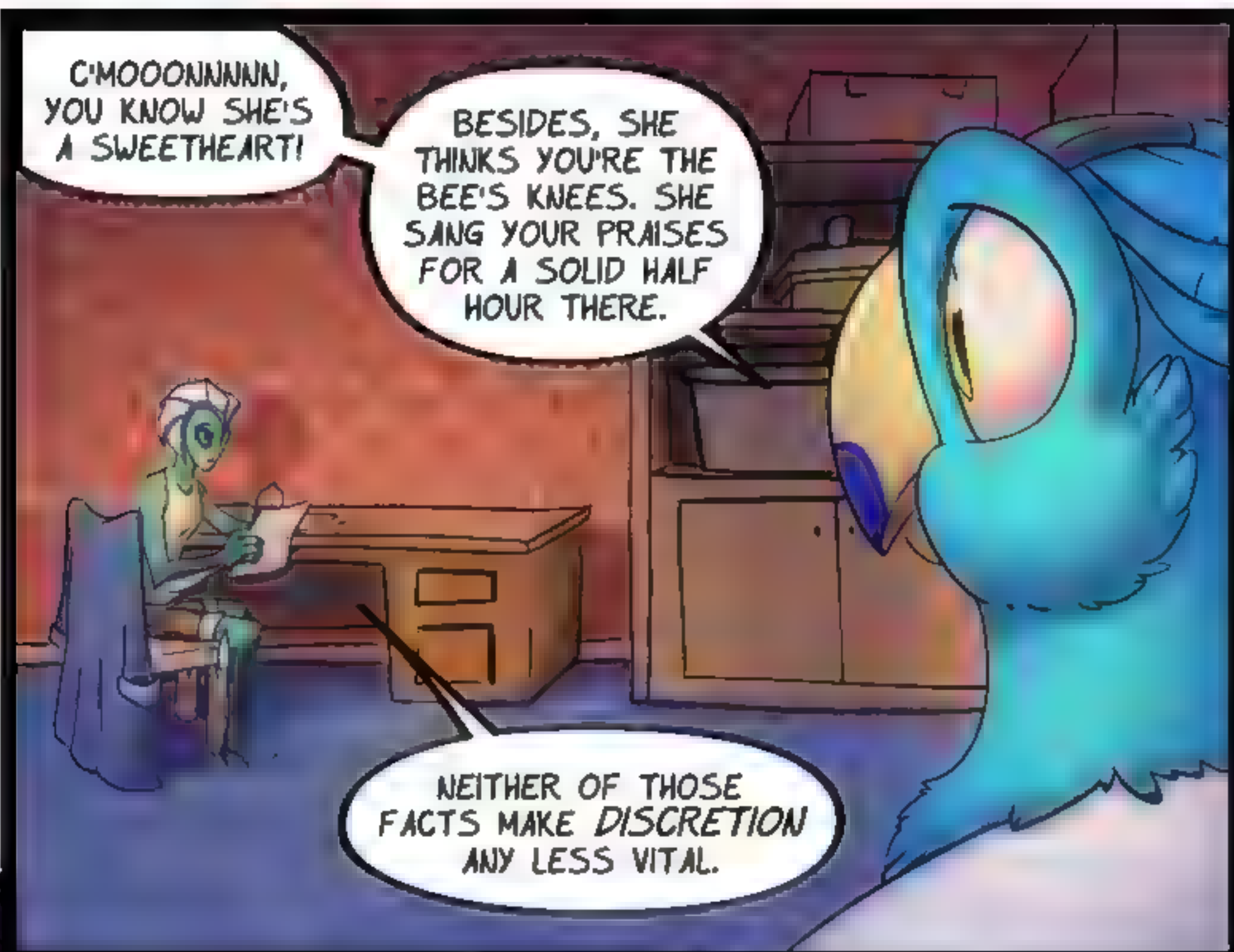
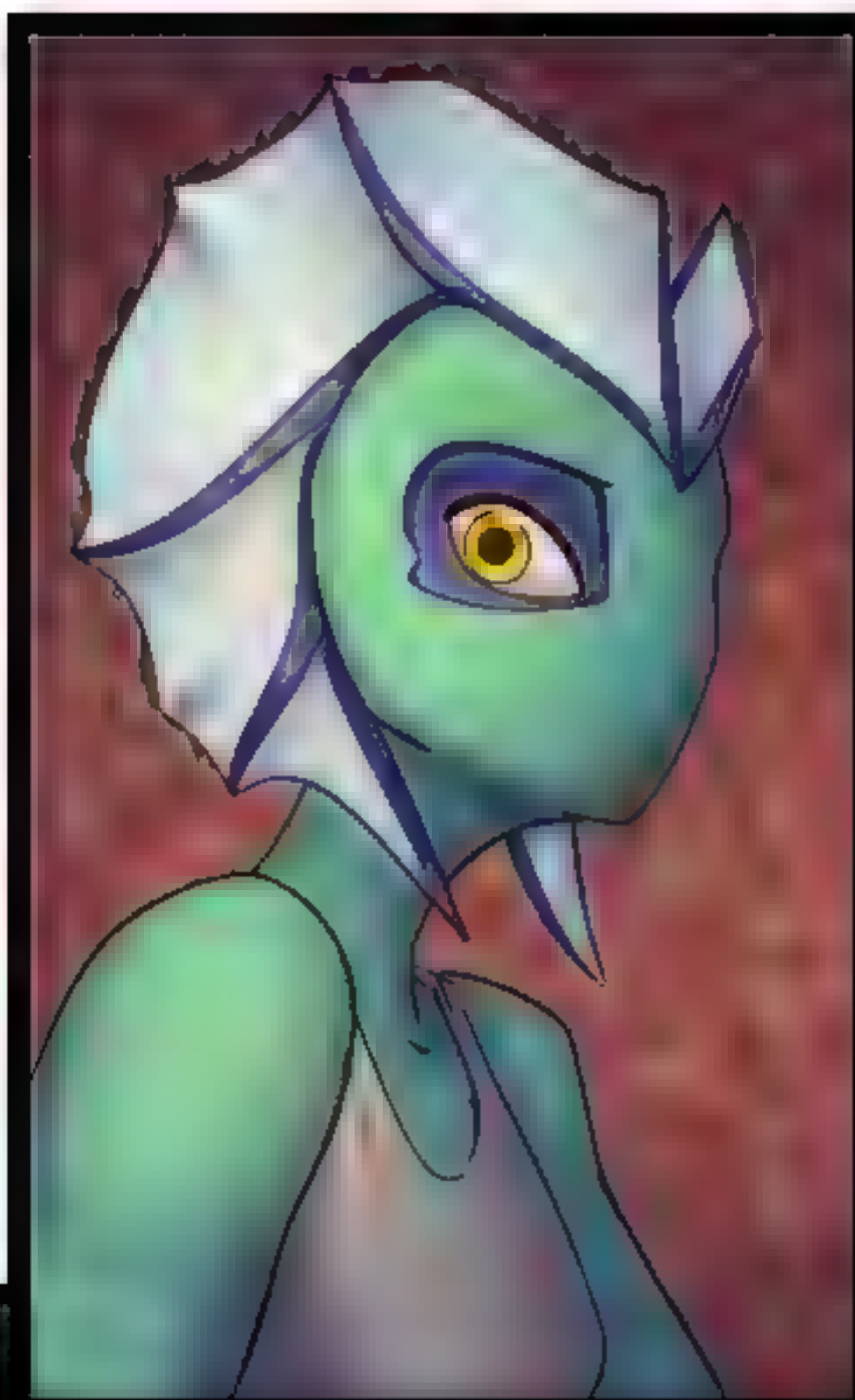




• • •







C'MOOONNNNN, YOU KNOW SHE'S A SWEETHEART!

BESIDES, SHE THINKS YOU'RE THE BEE'S KNEES. SHE SANG YOUR PRAISES FOR A SOLID HALF HOUR THERE.

NEITHER OF THOSE FACTS MAKE *DISCRETION* ANY LESS VITAL.



PFFFFFFF TRUST ME, YOU HAVEN'T EVEN *SEEN* DISCRETION UNTIL YOU MEET *YOURS TRULY*.

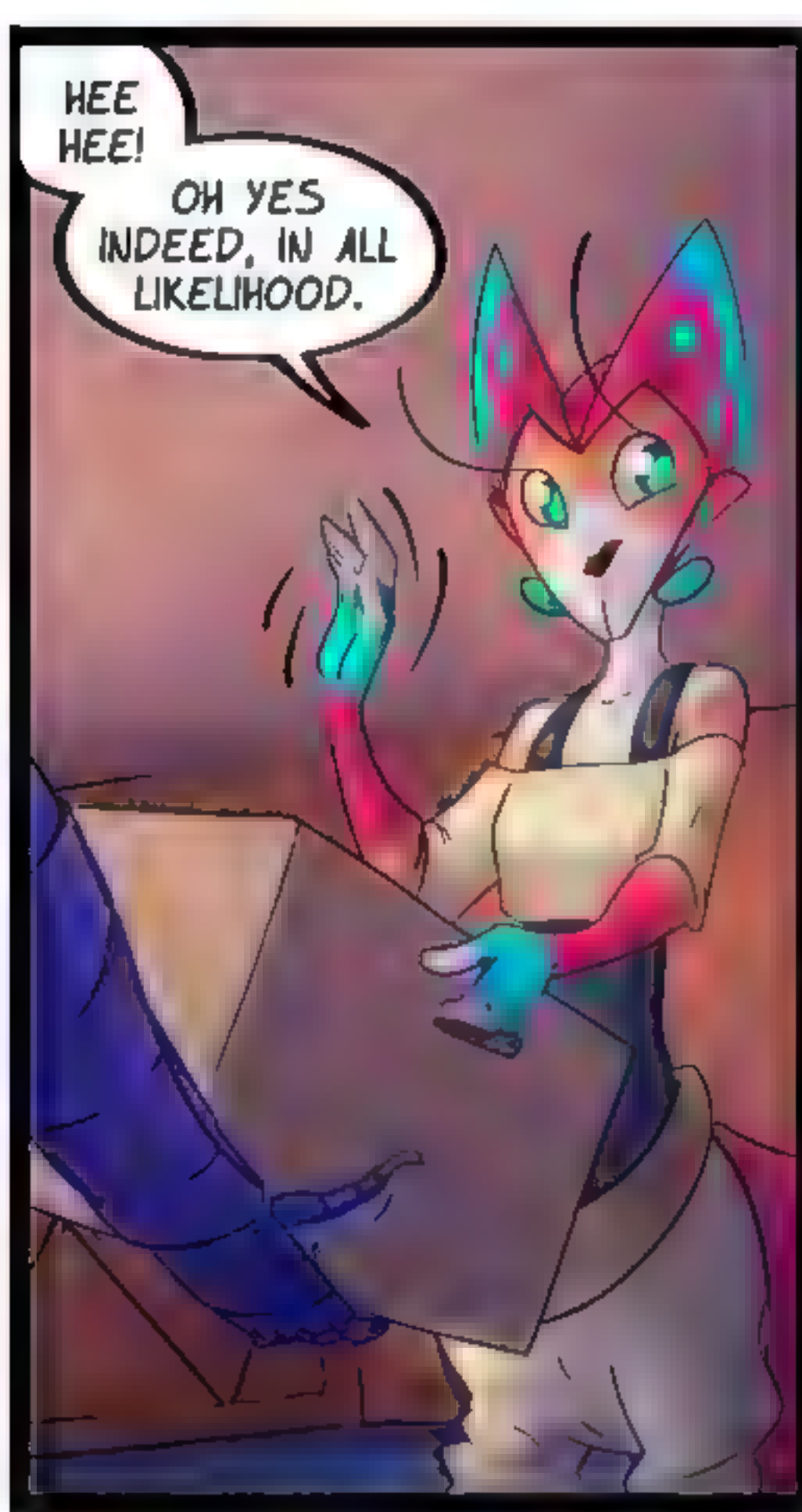
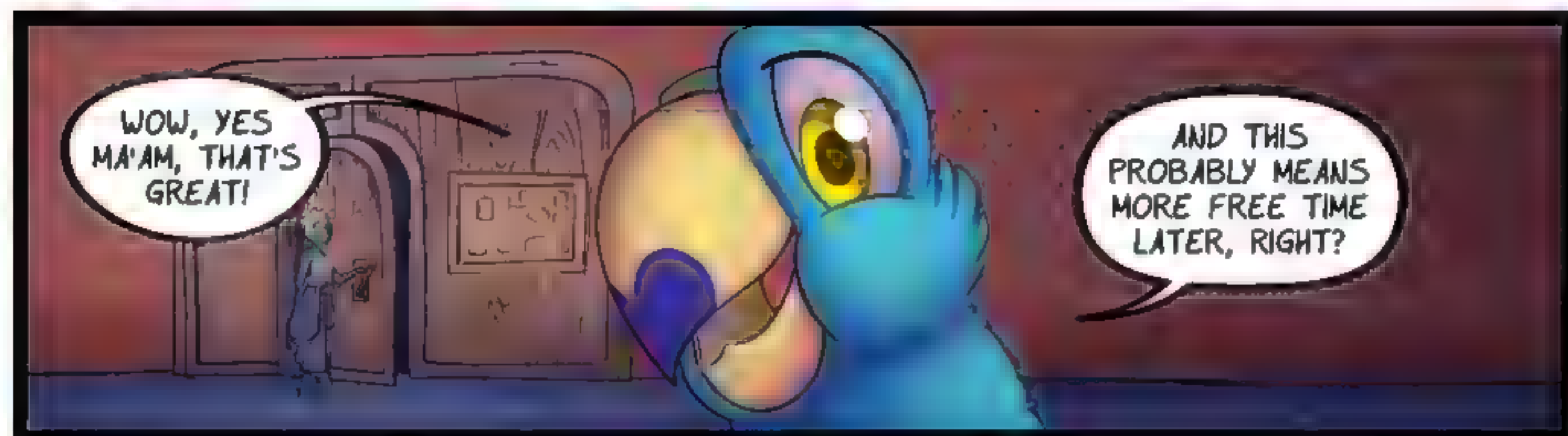


FINE. I BELIEVE YOU.

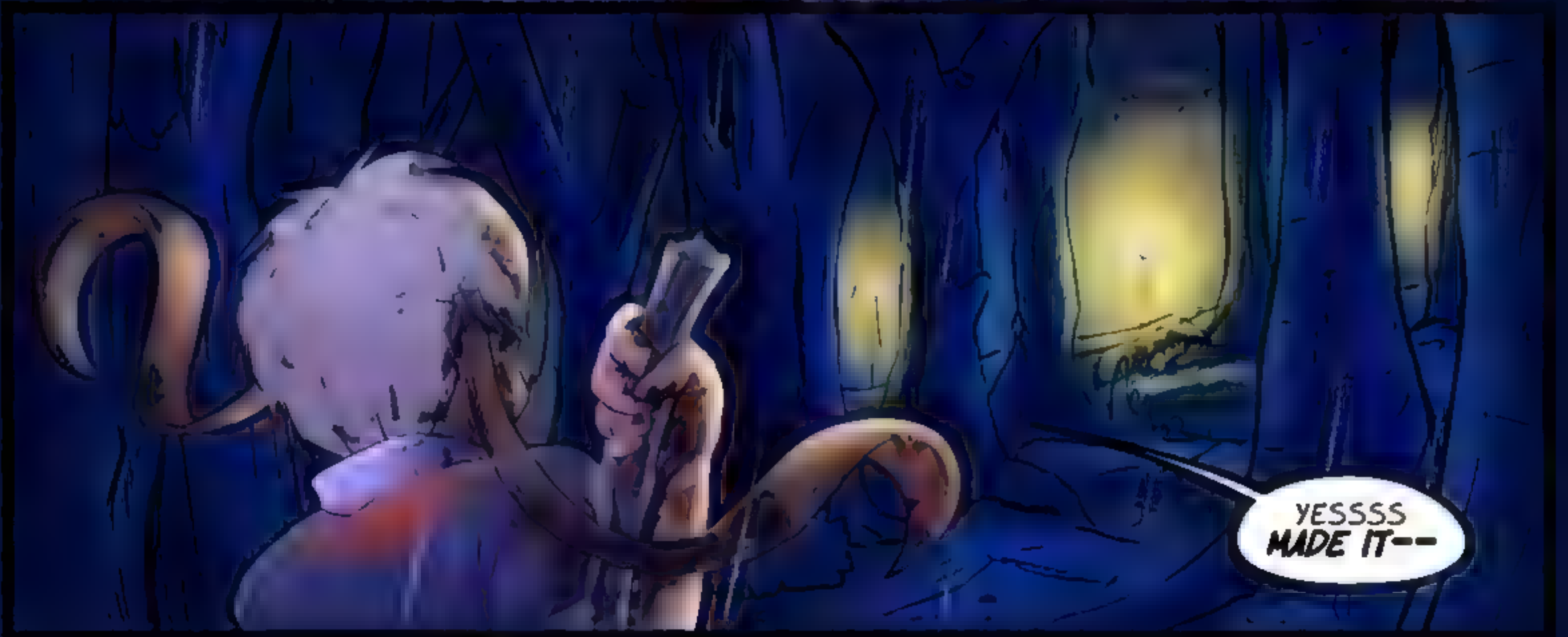
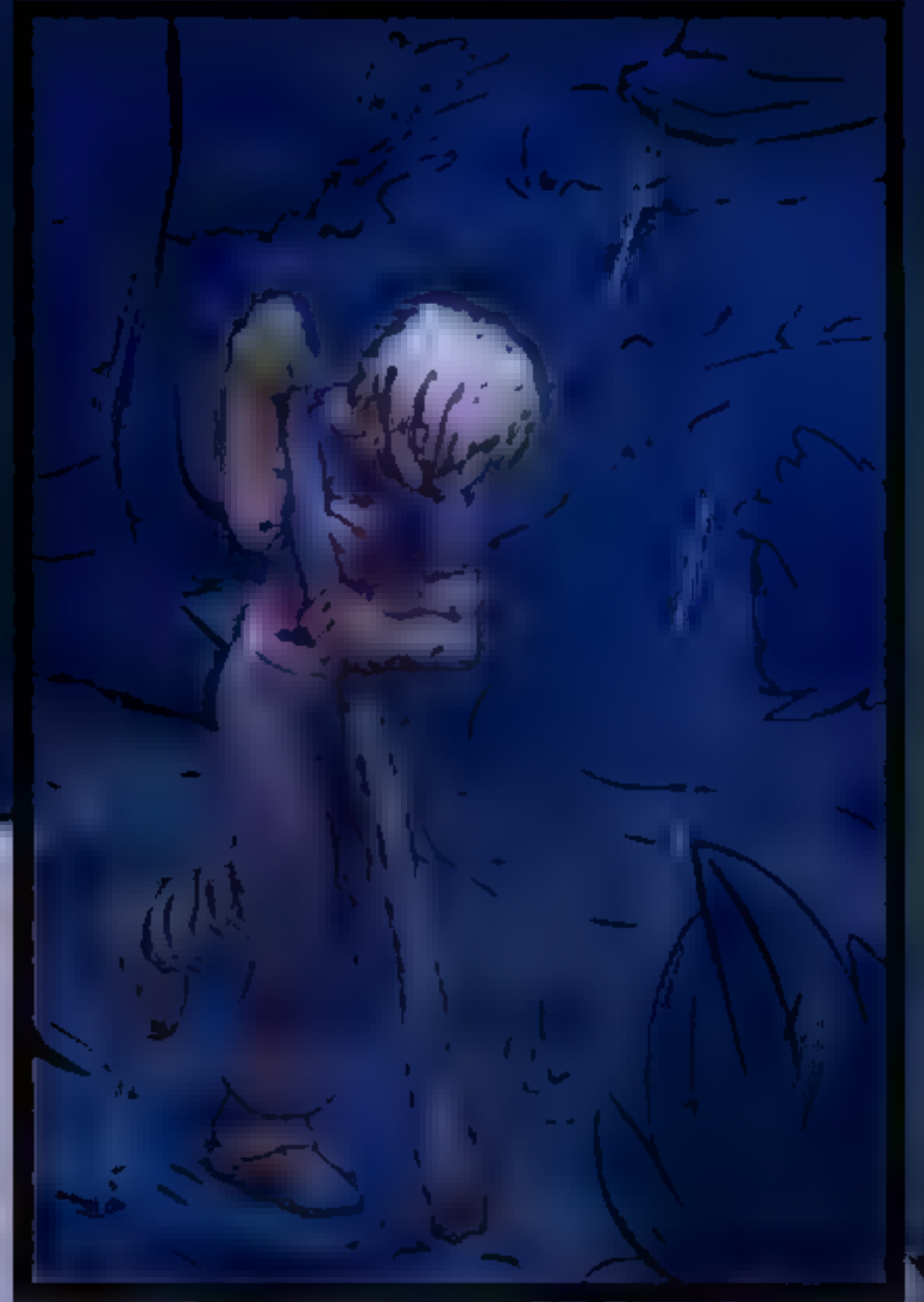
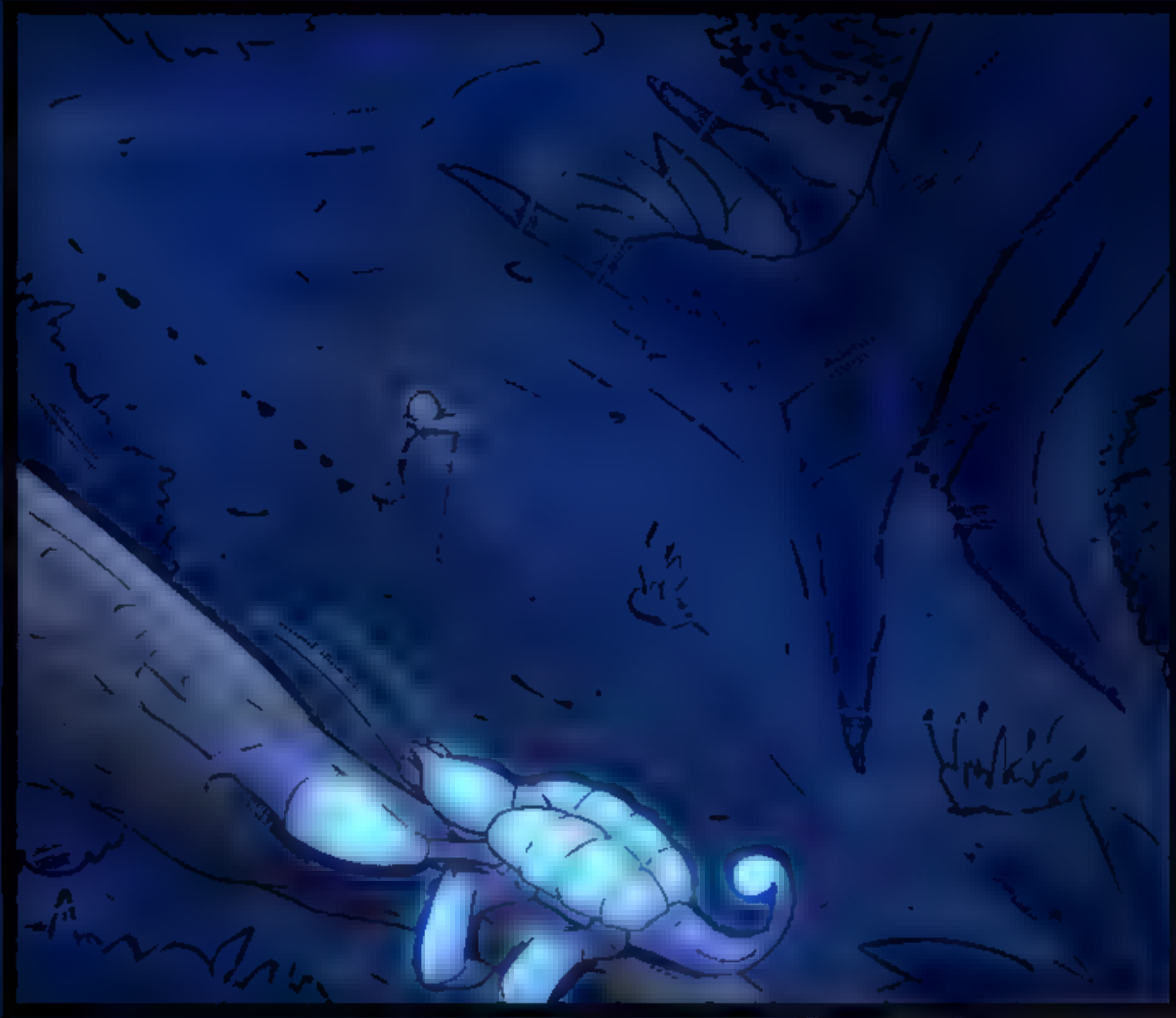
JUST REMEMBER -- IF SHE SO MUCH AS *TRIPS* OVER SOMETHING SHE SHOULDN'T...



...YOU KNOW HOW THAT ENDS.



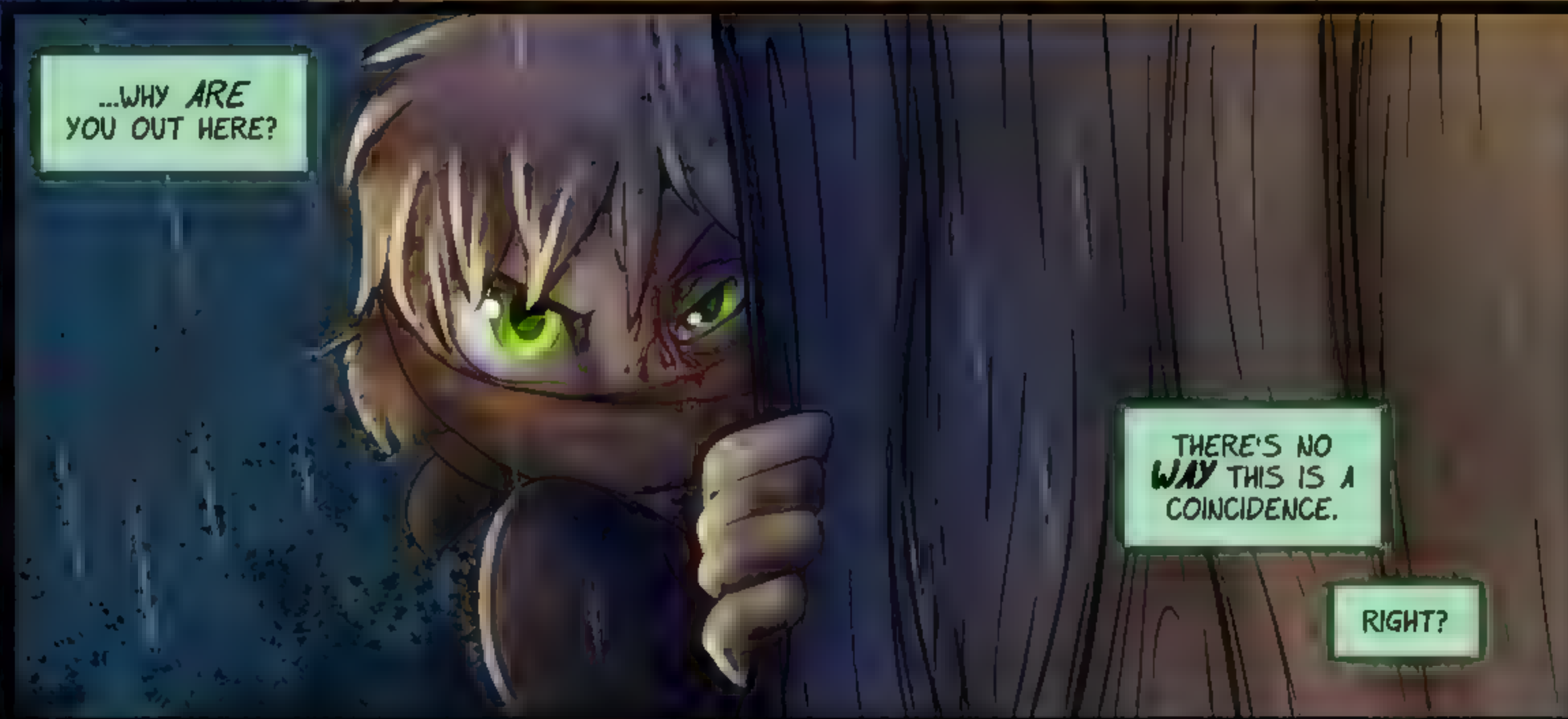
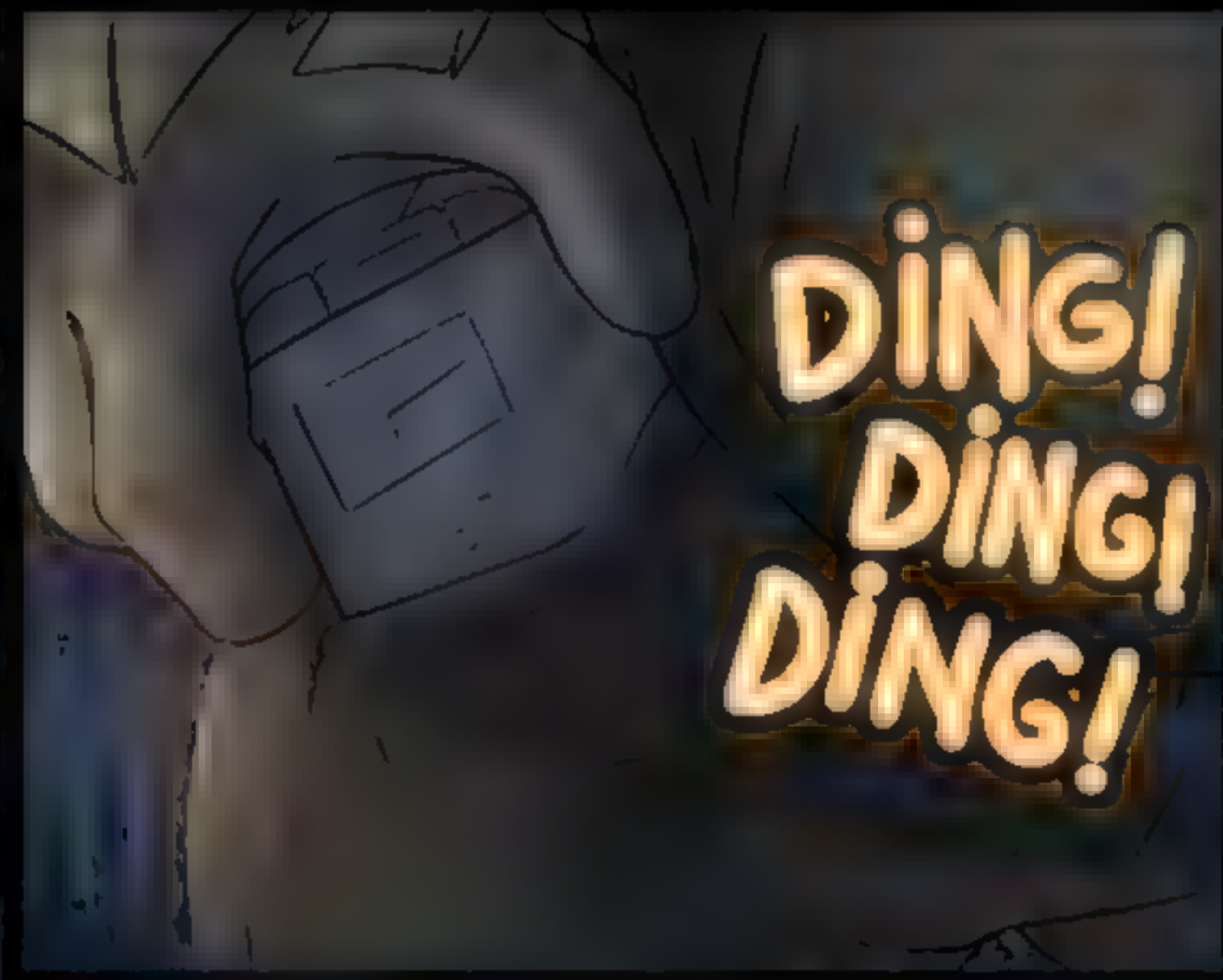




YESSSS
MADE IT--









THINK,
KHEIL.

AL WOULD SAY
YOU'RE JUMPING TO
CONCLUSIONS.

BUT OZ SAYS
SOMETIMES YOUR
GUT IS SMARTER
THAN YOU...



AND IF HE'S
RIGHT-- AND IF MY
GUT IS RIGHT-- THEN
THOTZEV IS SOME KIND
OF SECRET AGENT FOR
THE RHO-DA AGNA.

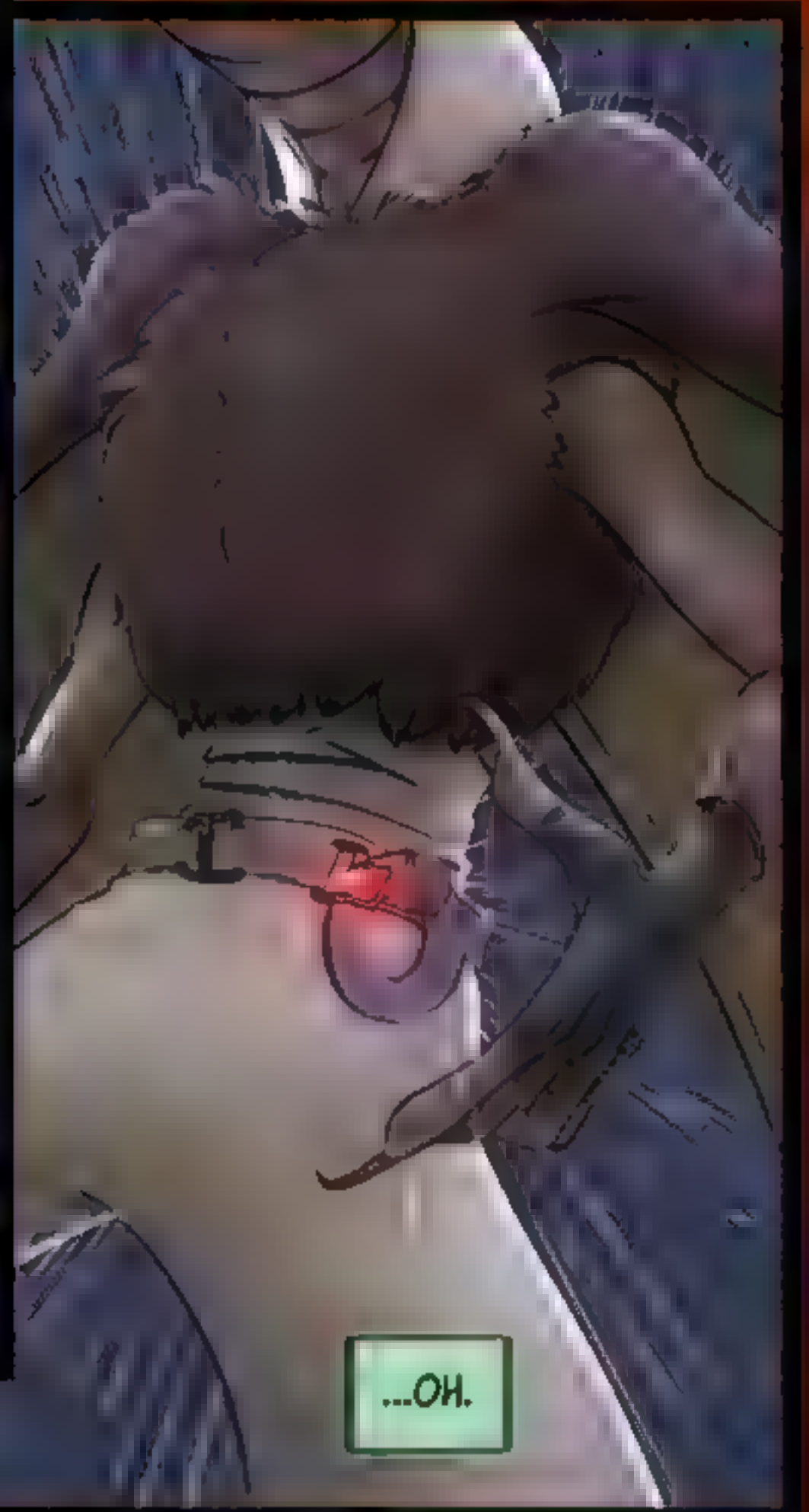
AND THEY COULD
COME IN AT ANY TIME,
GUNS BLAZING...

...OR, UH, NOT
GUNS BLAZING. THE
RHO-DA AGNA DON'T
DO GUNS...



THEY DO
RINGS.

JUST LIKE...



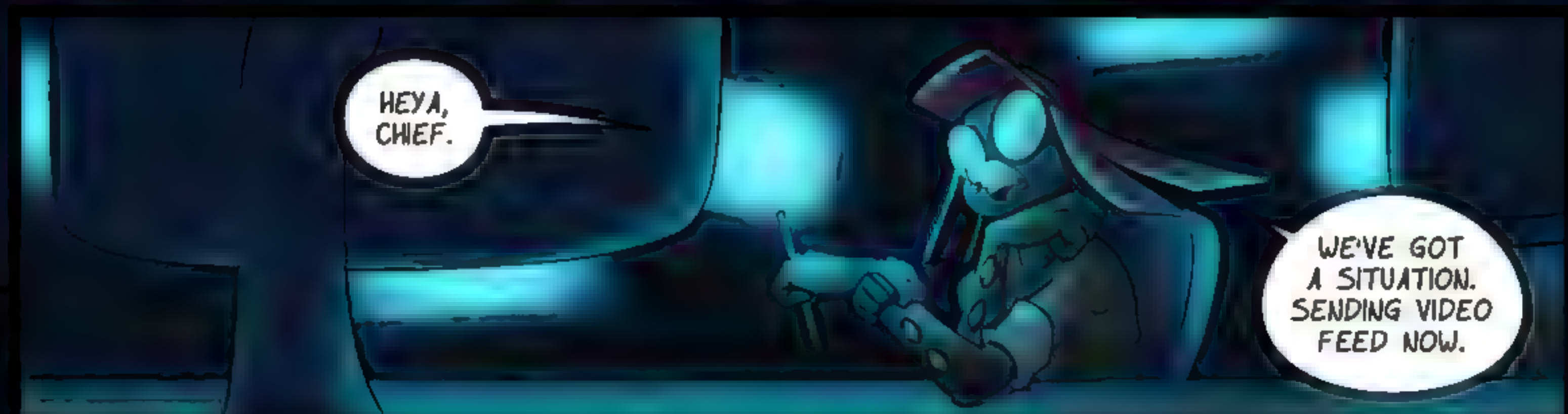
...OH.

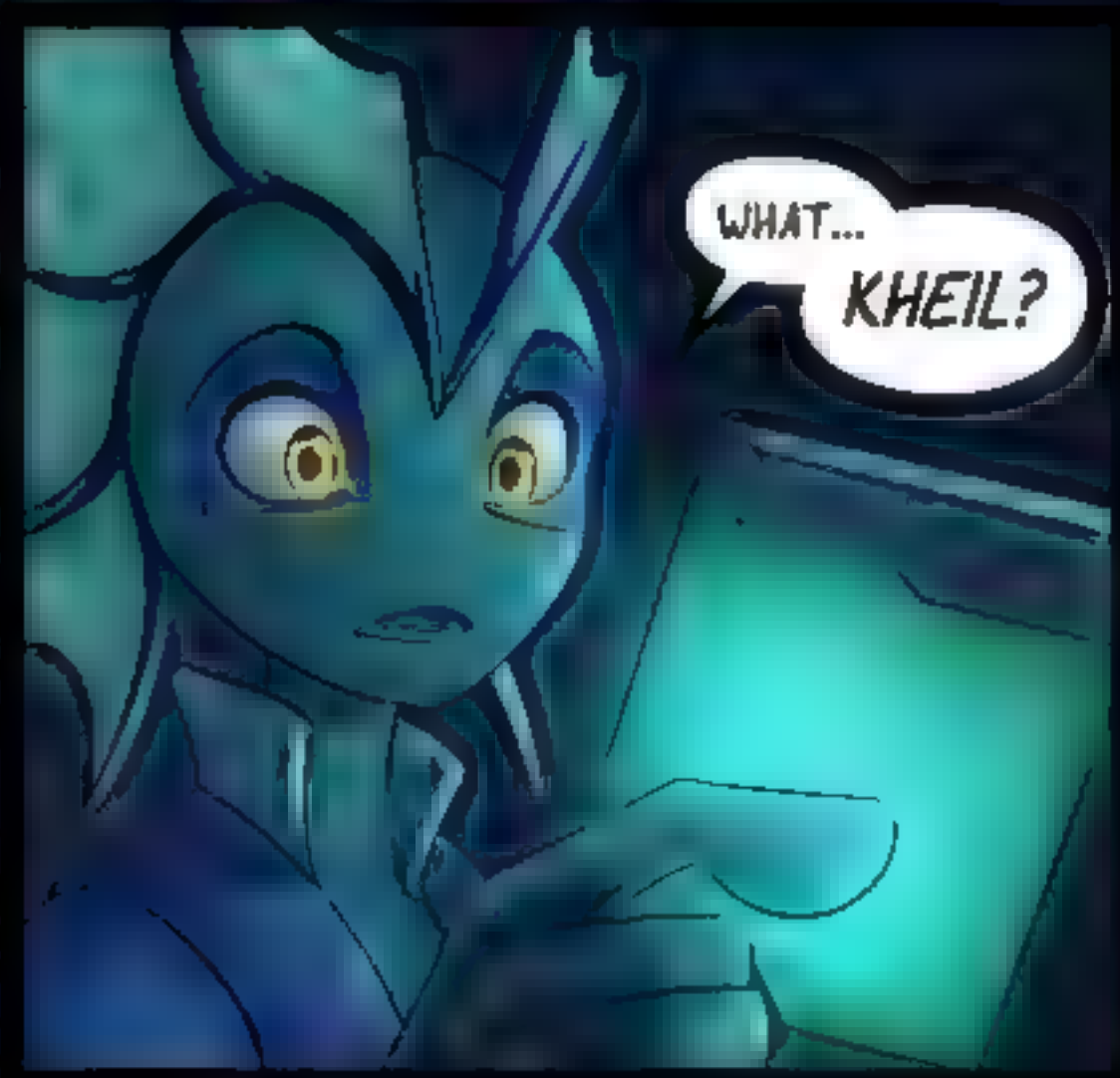
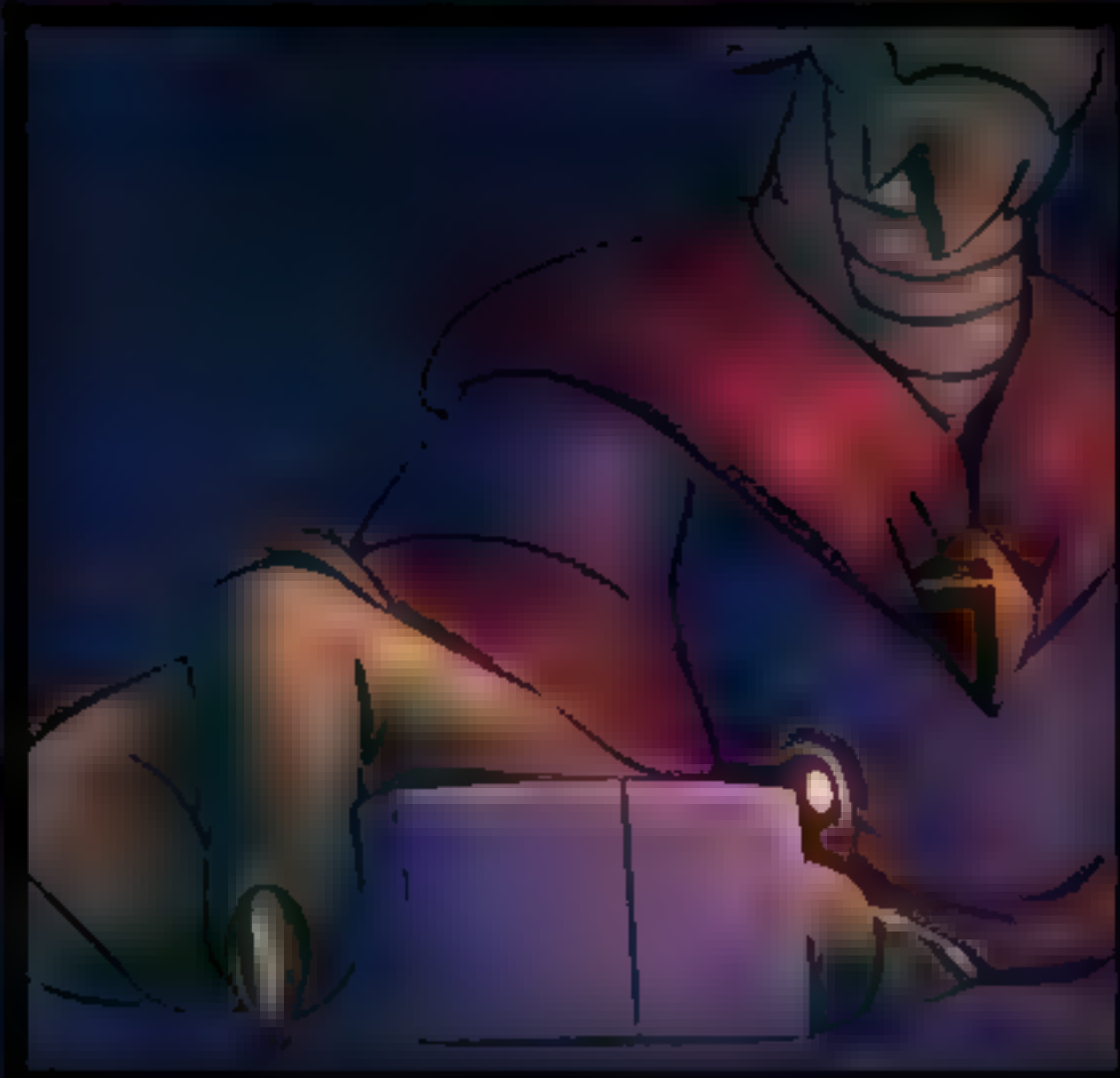
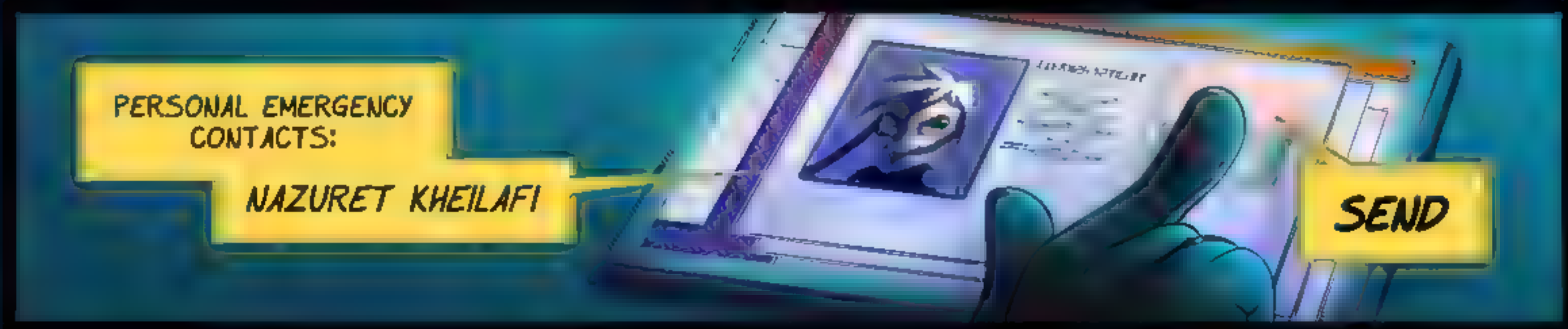


OOOOH BOY.
OKAY, GOTTA
GET TO DAD.

OR MAYBE
Z FIRST.

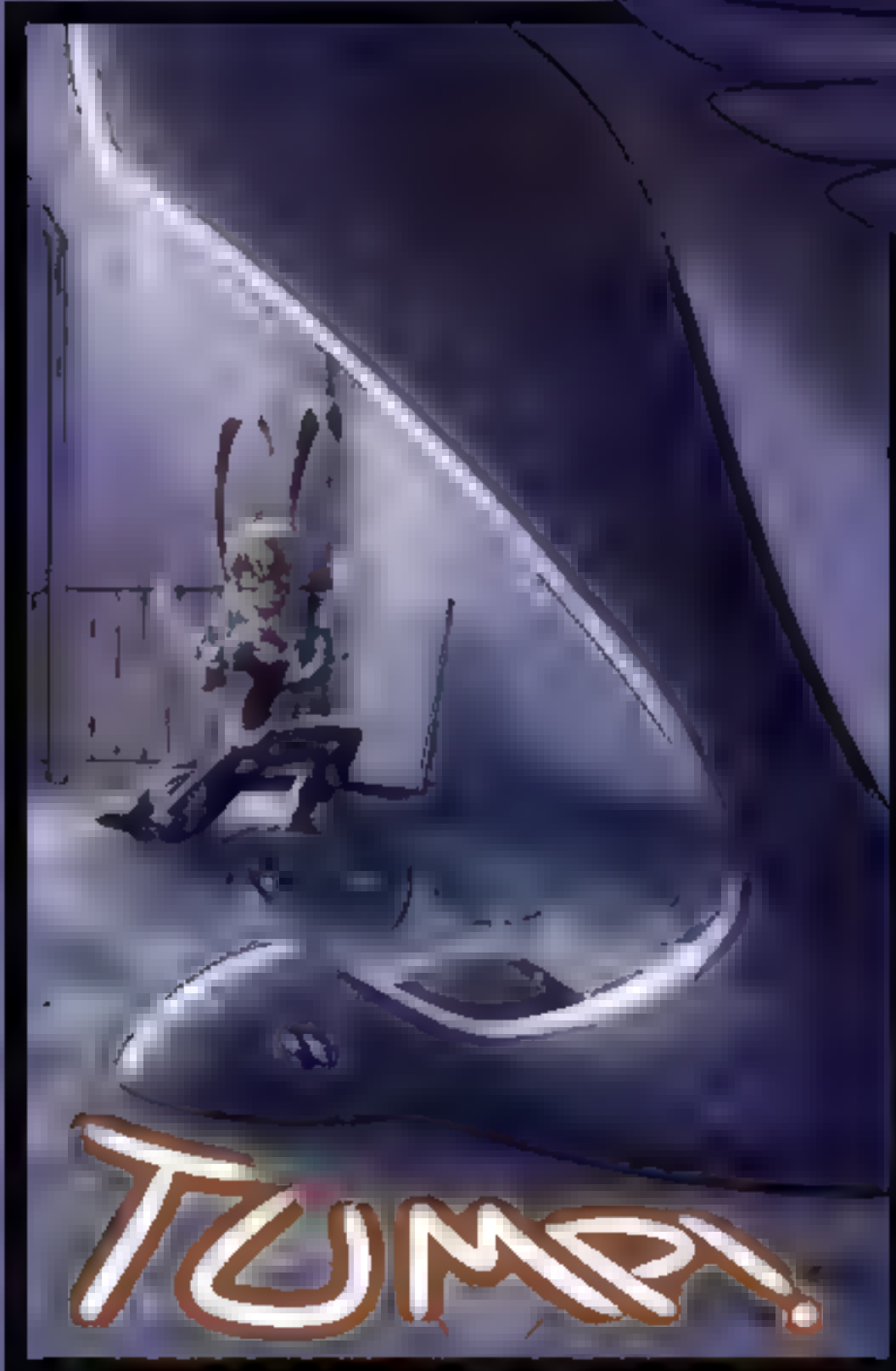
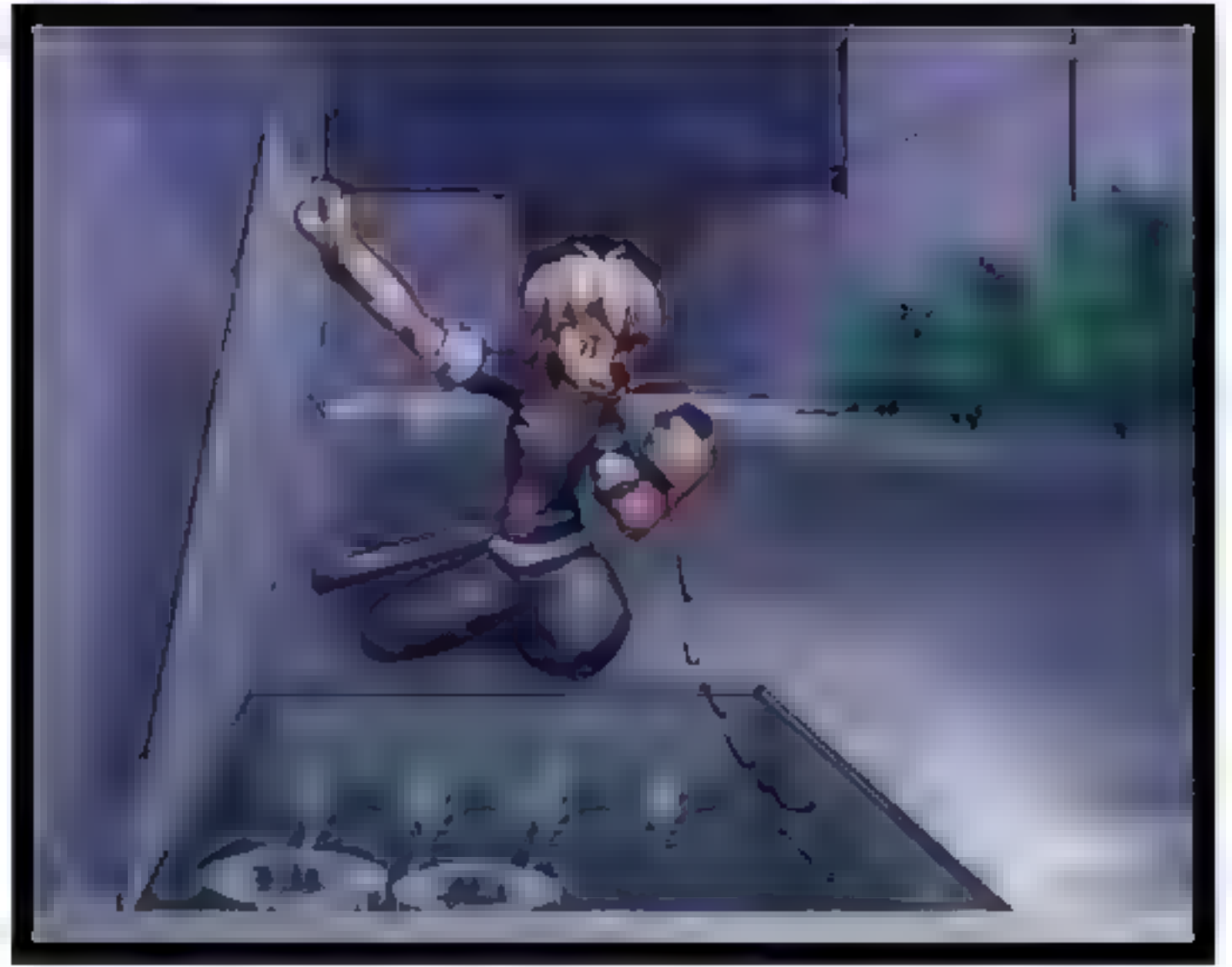
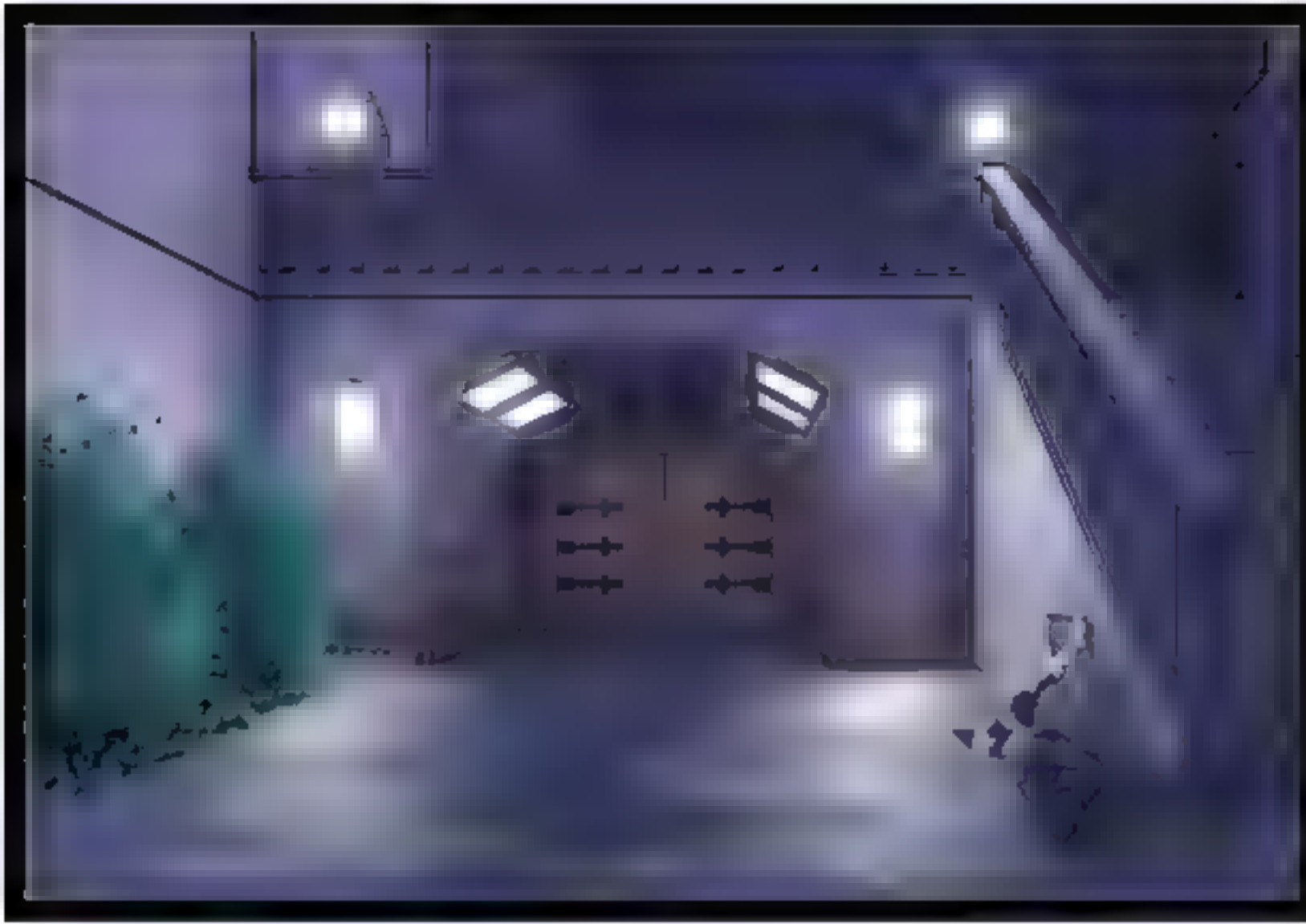
WHERE DO
I FIND Z?







KHEILAFI?









NAZURET
KHEILAFI.

I TAKE MY
EYES OFF YOU
FOR *ONE DAY* AND
FIND YOU RUNNING
AROUND THE WOODS.
BLEEDING.

I'M SORRY,
I--

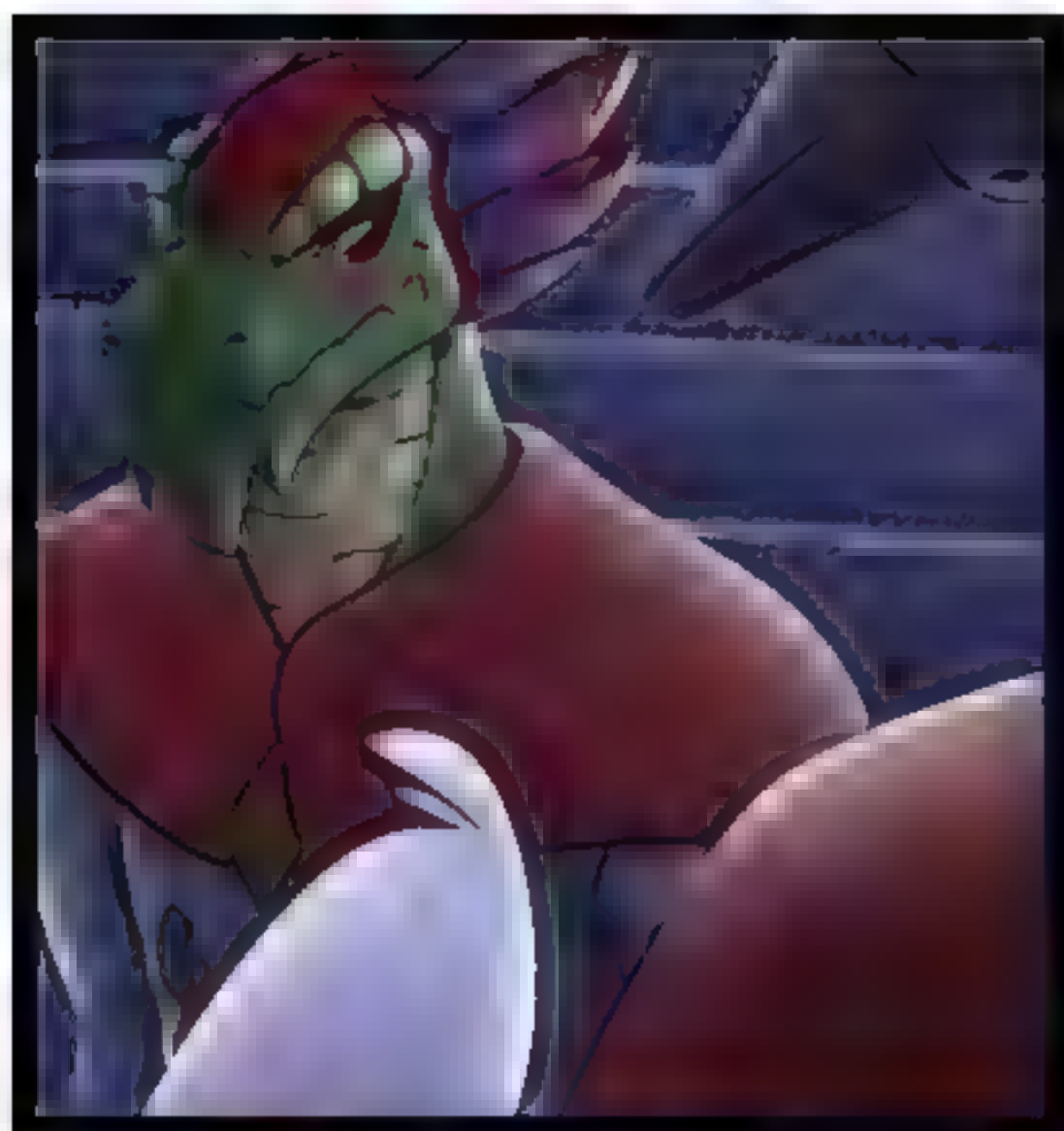
I AM NOT
ANGRY. I AM
DISAPPOINTED.

IT SHOULD GO
WITHOUT SAYING
THAT I EXPECTED
BETTER OF YOU.

KRAON.

I ASKED YOU
NOT TO BITE
HER HEAD OFF.





KHEIL, YOU
GAVE YOUR FATHER
AN AWFUL FRIGHT.

AND I FULLY
EXPECT YOU TO *EXPLAIN*
YOURSELF AND MAKE
IT UP TO HIM.

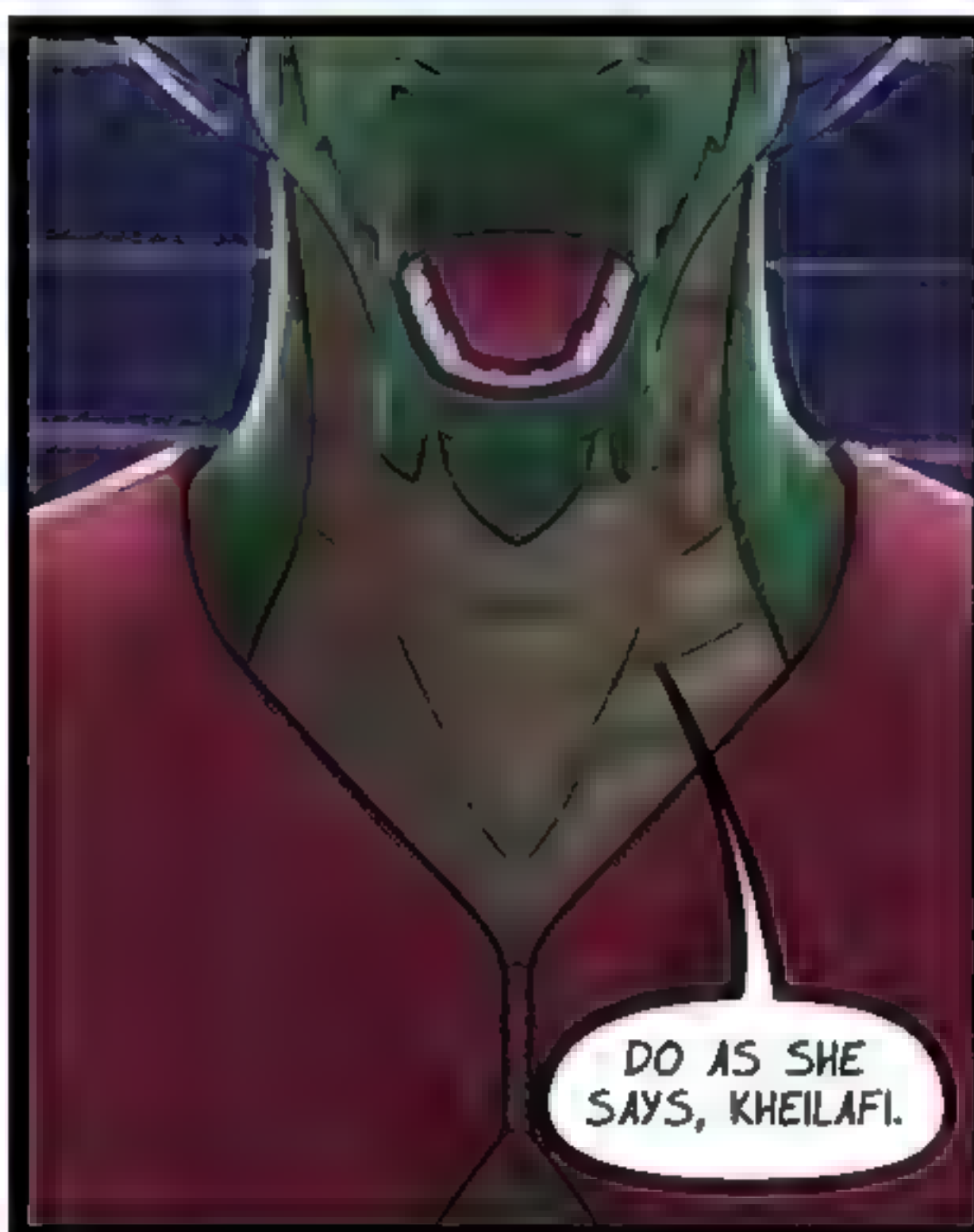
BUT LATER.



RIGHT NOW,
CHECK-UP TIME.
COME WITH ME--



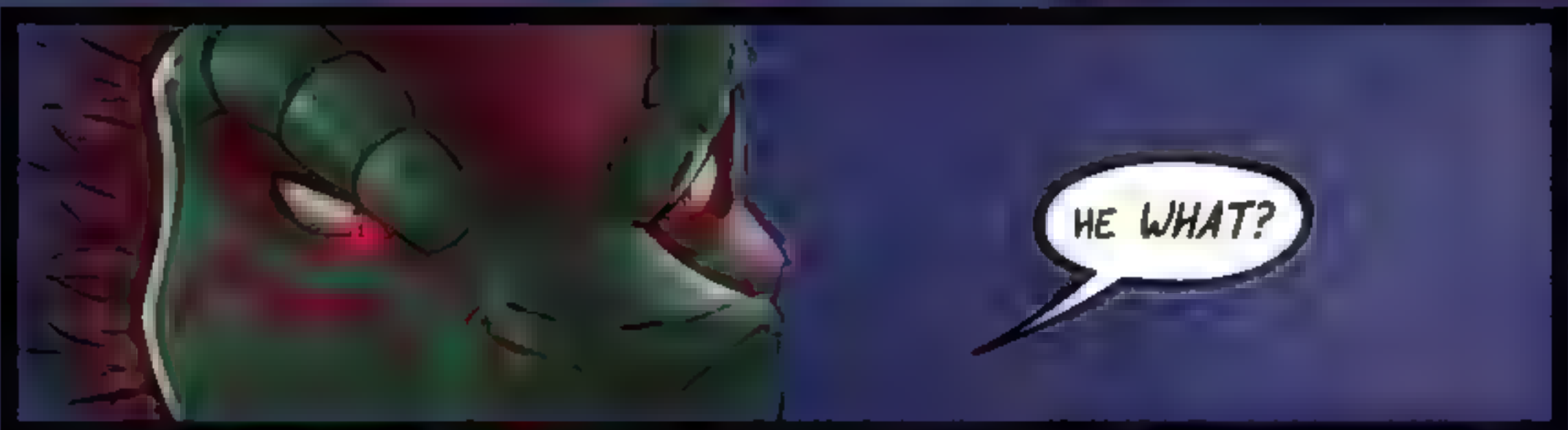
WAIT WAIT WAIT, NO!
DAD, I GOTTA TELL
YOU SOMETHING!



DO AS SHE
SAYS, KHEILAFI.



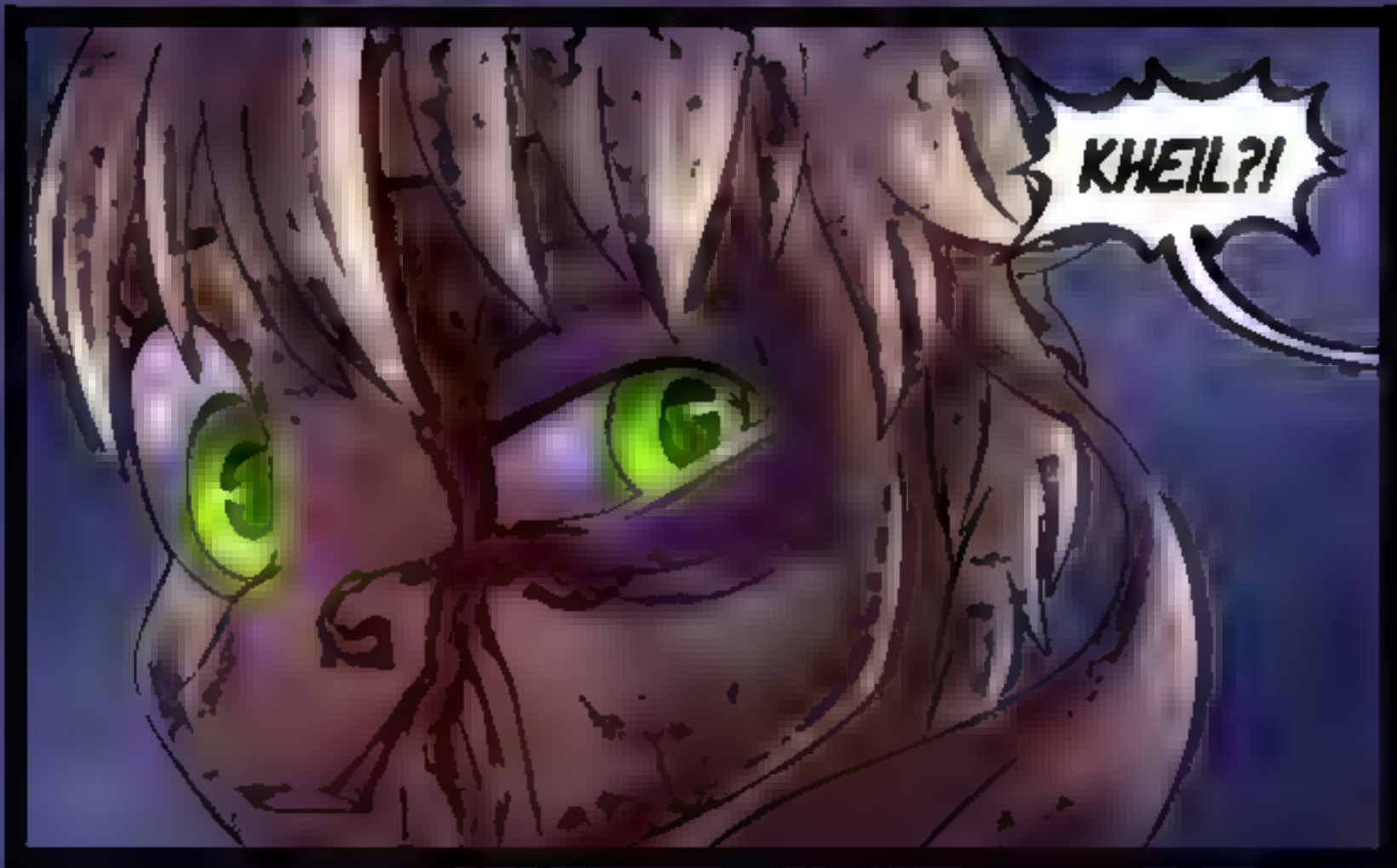
NO, DAD, **LISTEN!**
FALLAN GOT KIDNAPPED
BY SOME FLYING FREAK!



HE WHAT?



KIDNAPPED!
SHE AMBUSHED
HIM OUTSIDE THE
DORM BUILDING--

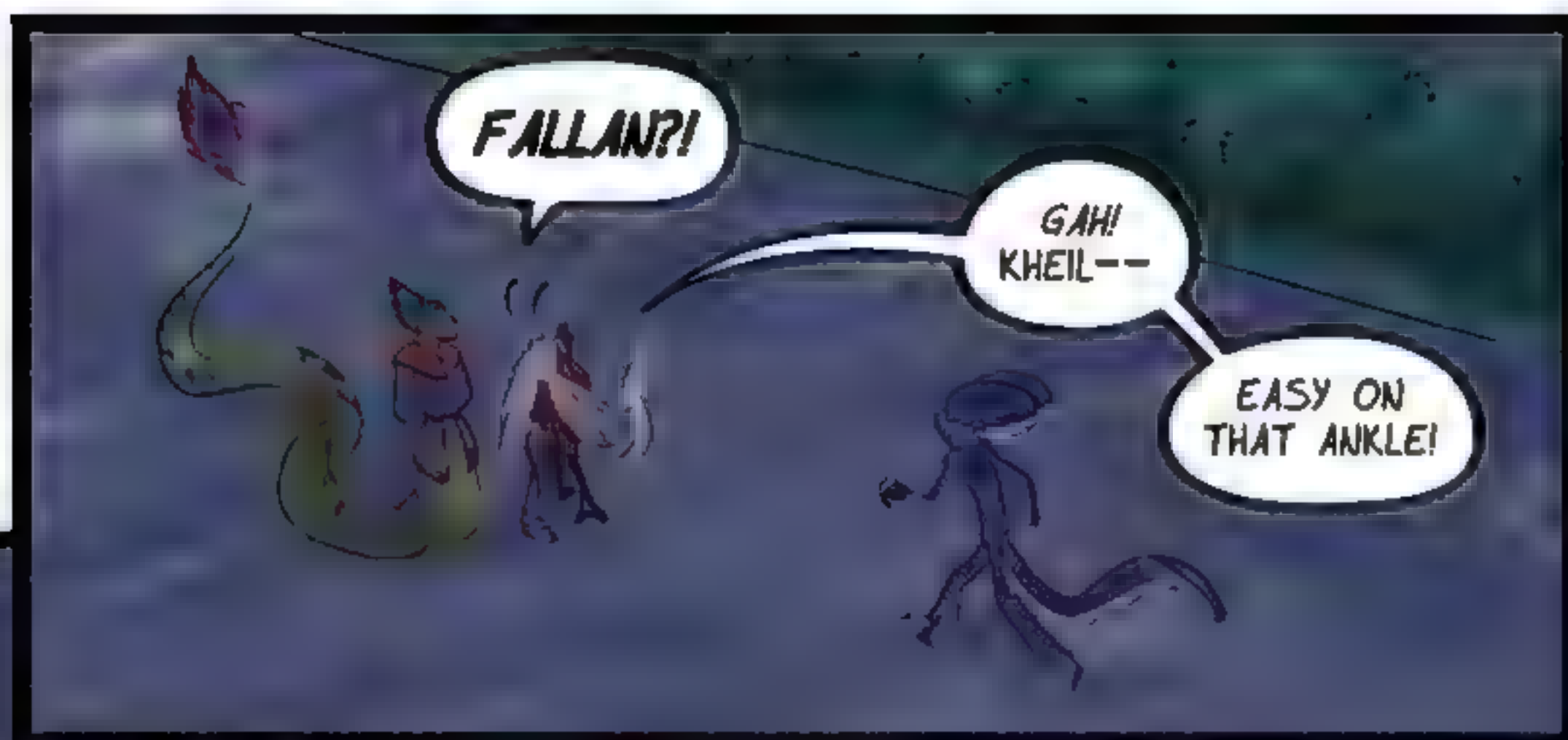


KHEIL?!



HOLY COW,
ARE YOU OKAY?
WHAT HAPPENED?

WHERE
WERE YOU?



FALLAN?!

GAH!
KHEIL--

EASY ON
THAT ANKLE!

HOW DID YOU
GET AWAY? WHERE'S
THE FLYING MENACE,
ARE THEY STILL
OUT THERE?

I TRIED
GOING AFTER
YOU, BUT--

KHEILAFI.

SLOW DOWN.

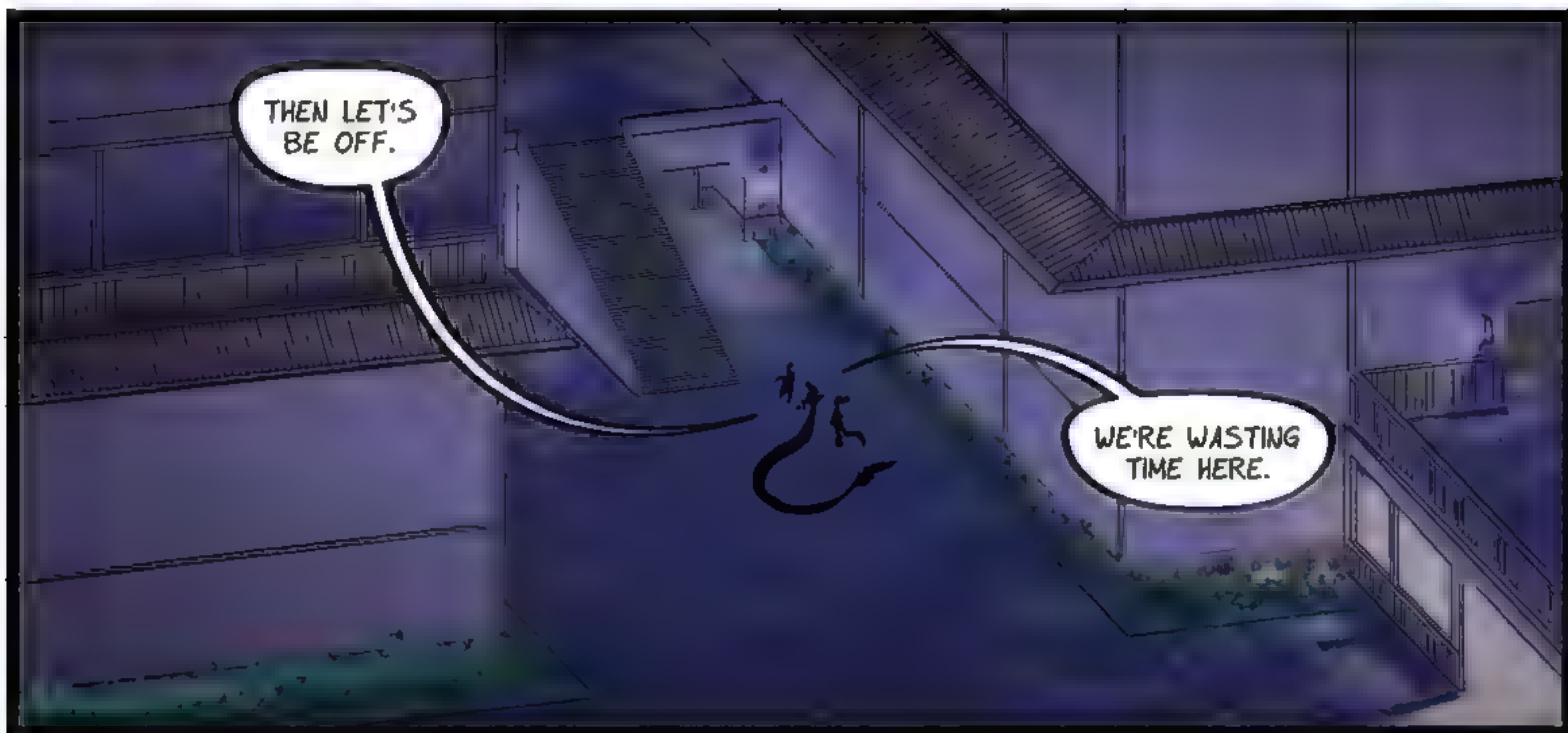
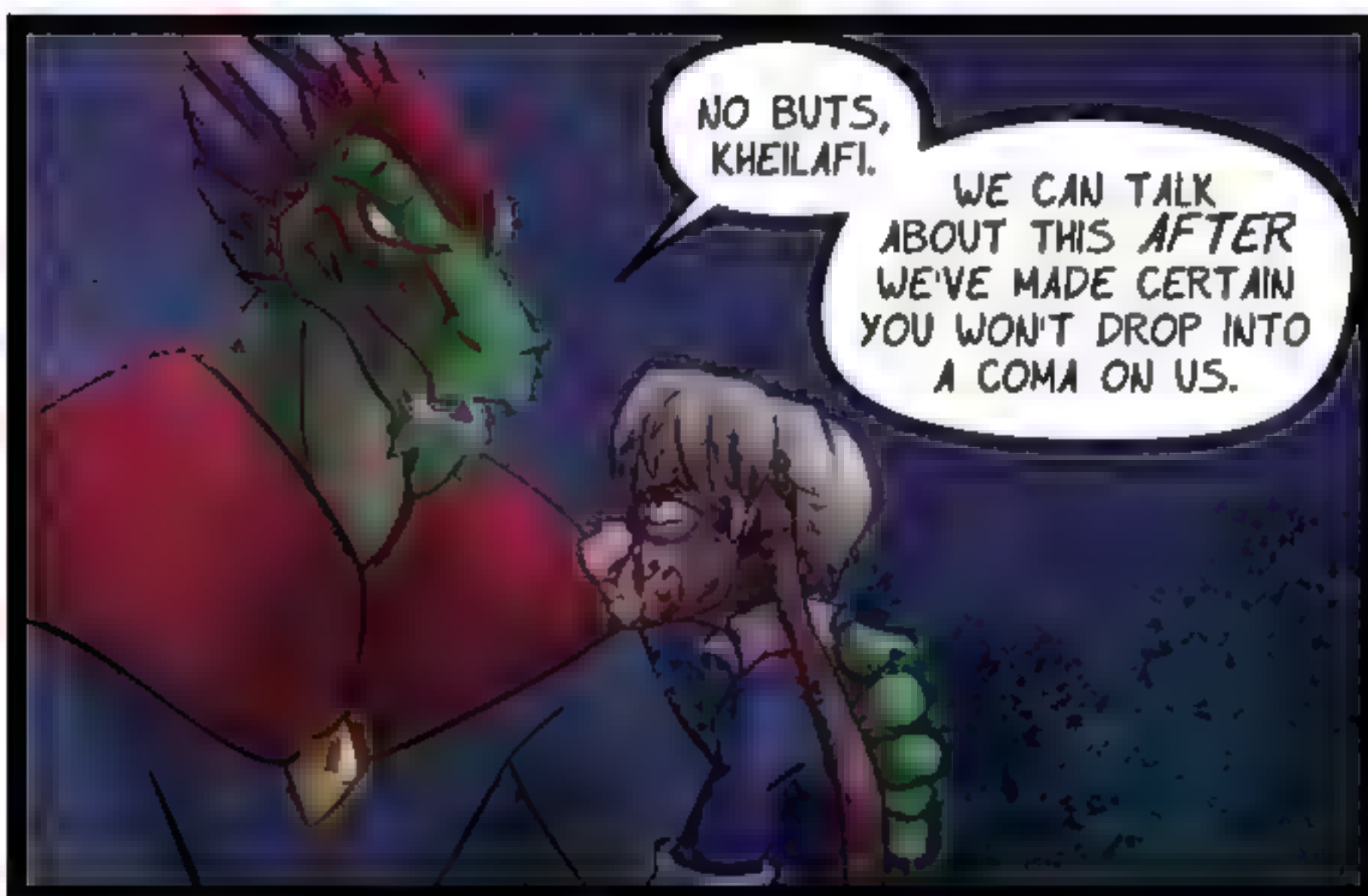
"GET AWAY?"
WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?

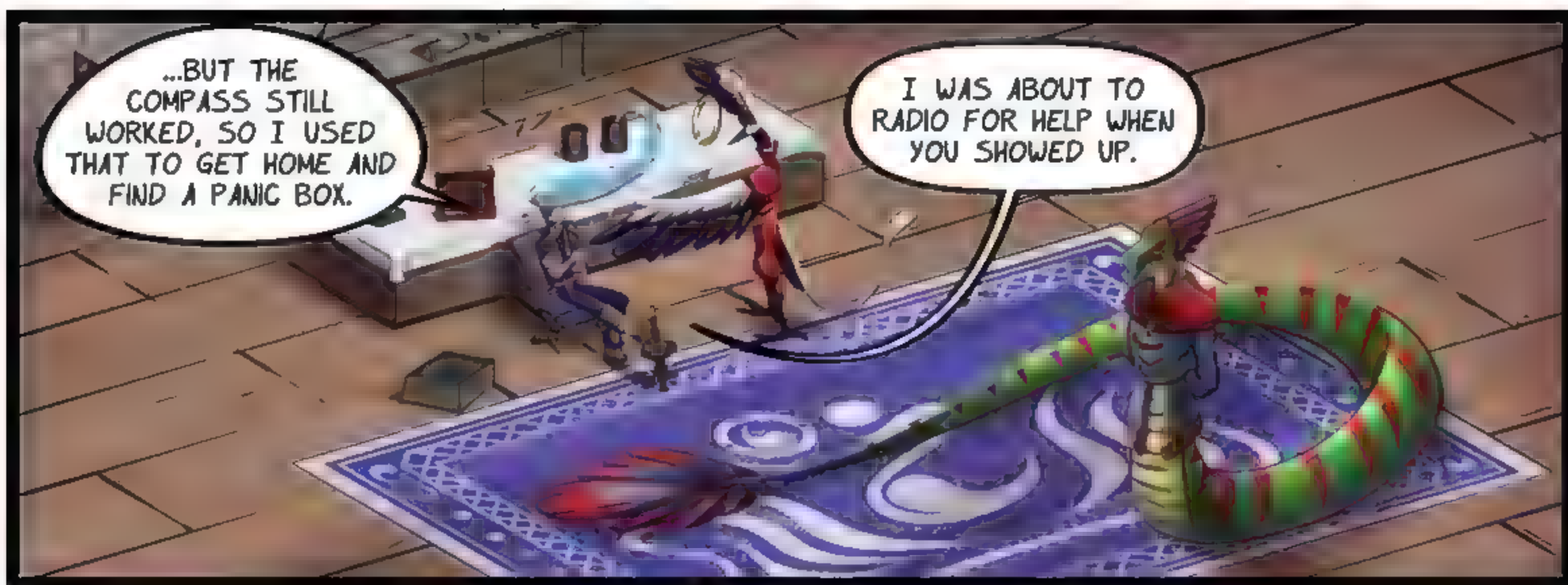
OH NO--
DID YOU HIT
YOUR HEAD?

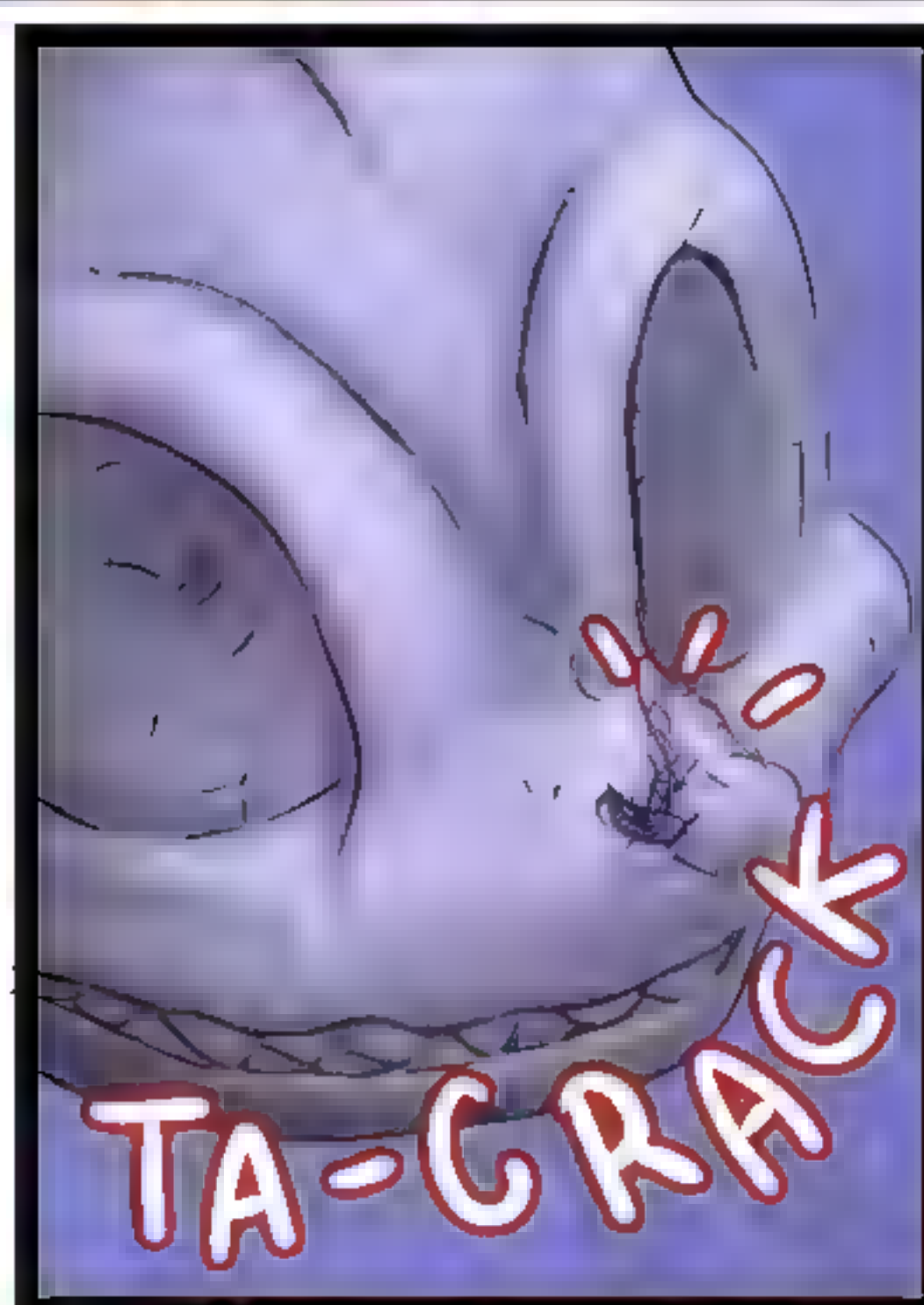
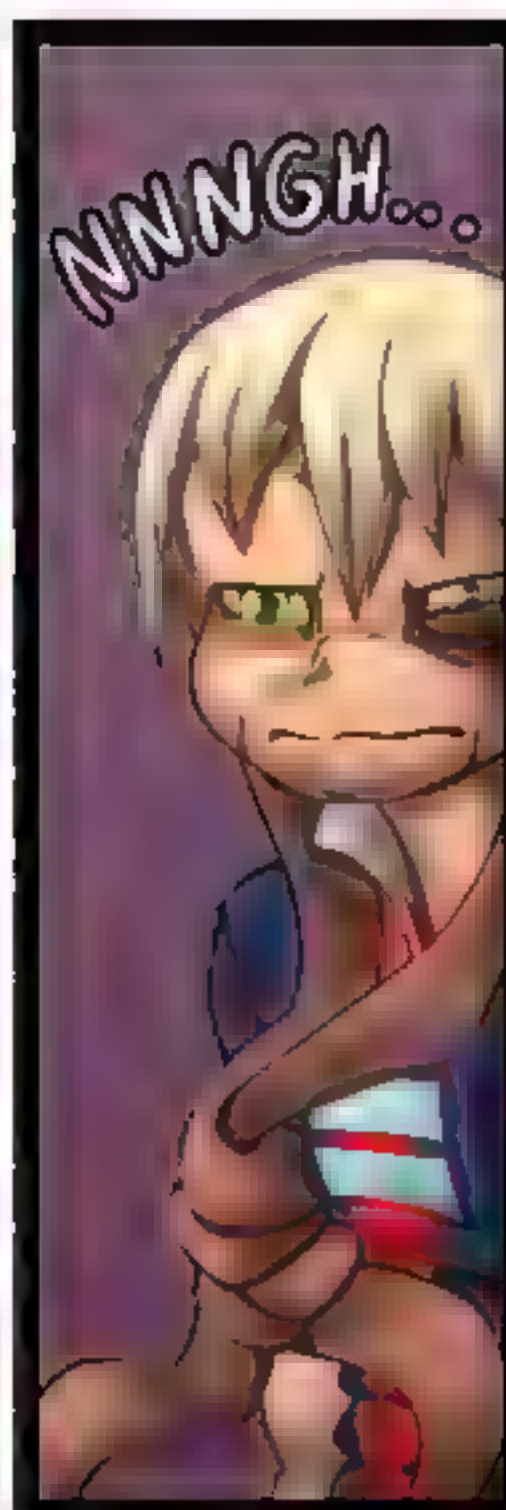
FALLAN.

THAT IS A
QUESTION FOR
DR. SARAN, IF
YOU WILL ALLOW
HER TO DO
HER JOB.

EVERYONE: TO
THE INFIRMARY.









...YE-- YES,
M-MINUS ONE
ROUND--

ACK!

TAK

KEK



BREATHE, KHEILAFI.
YOU'RE TOUGHER THAN
A LITTLE PAIN.

OW
OW
OW



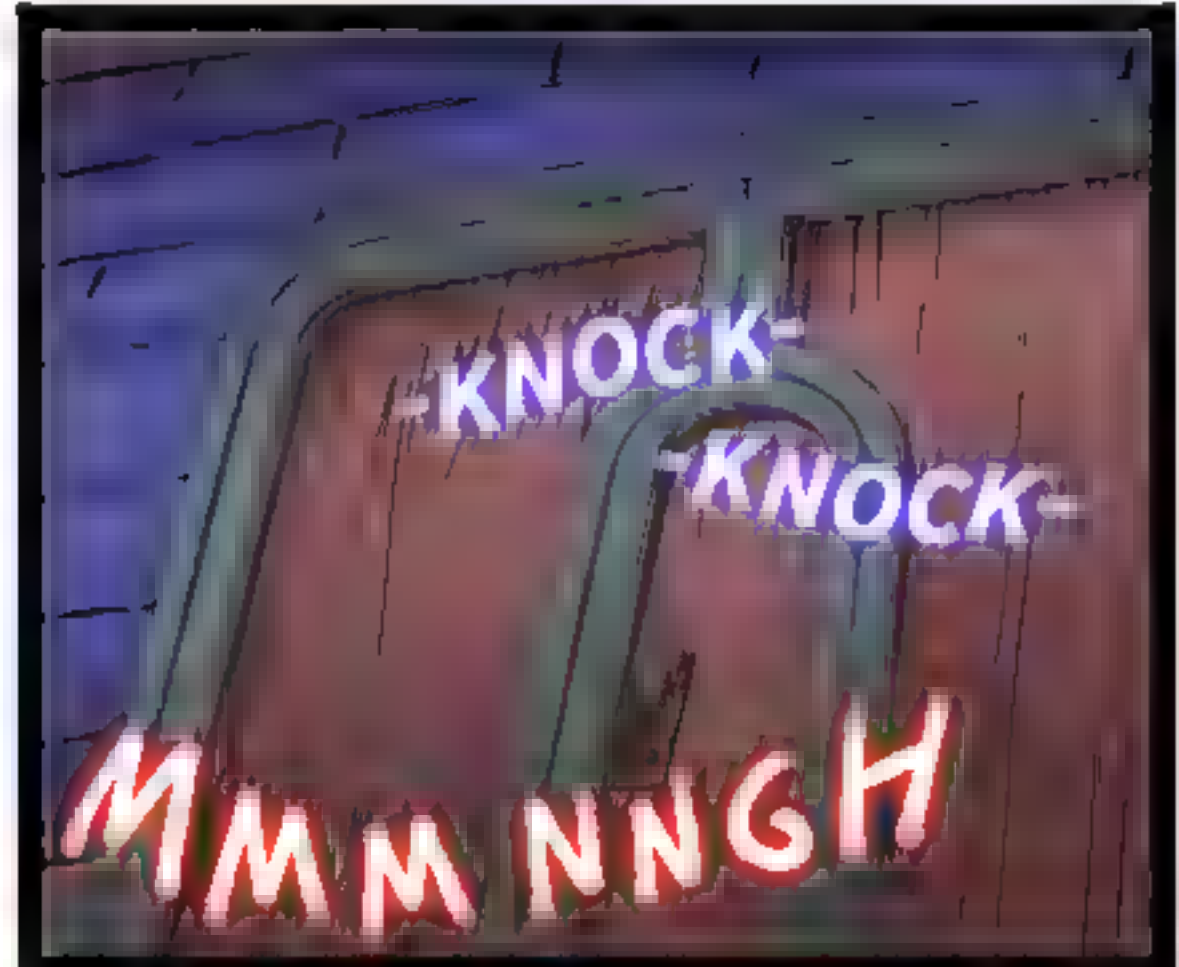
HERE,
CRUSH ME.

OW

OW



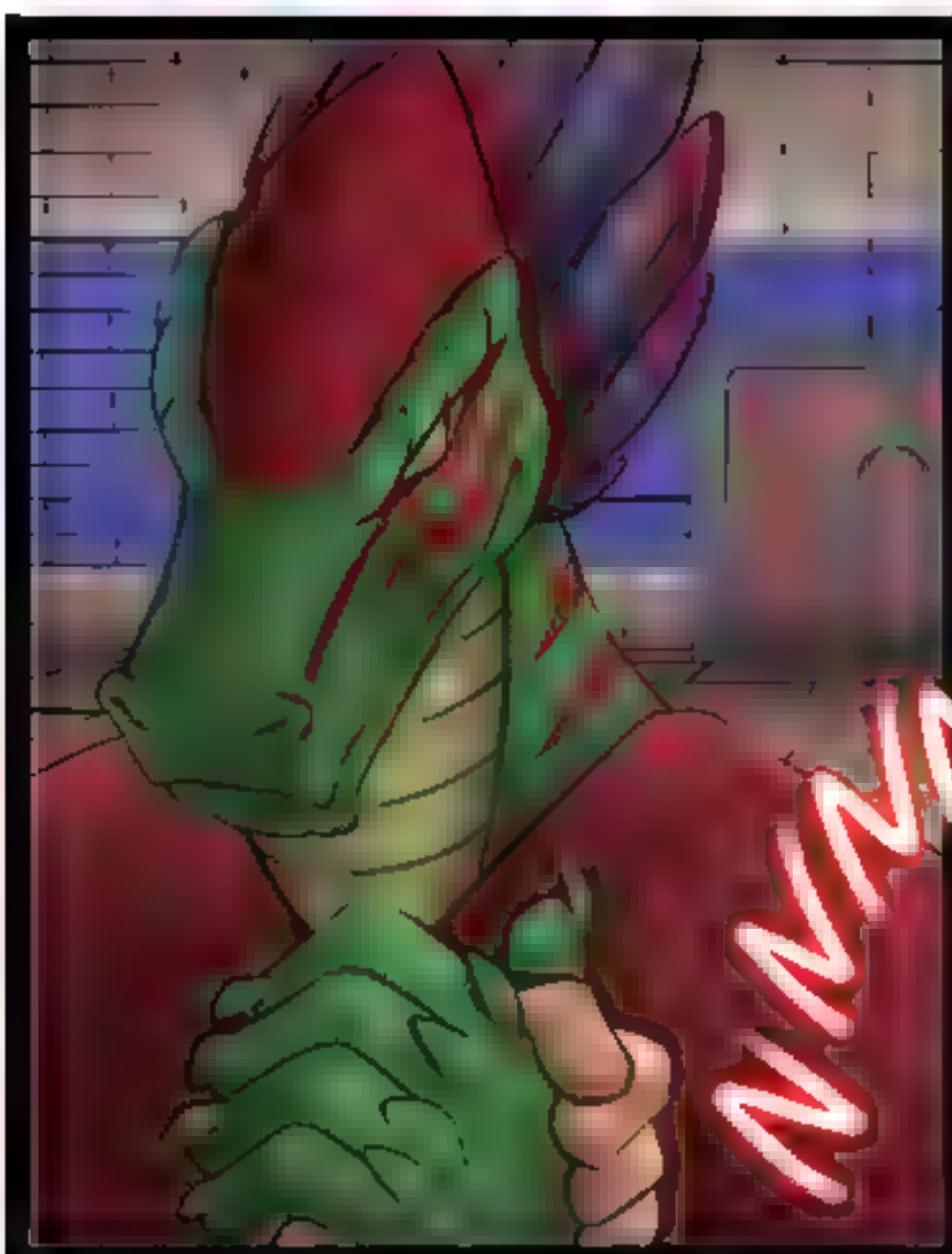
HMM



-KNOCK-

-KNOCK-

MMM NNGH



NAN



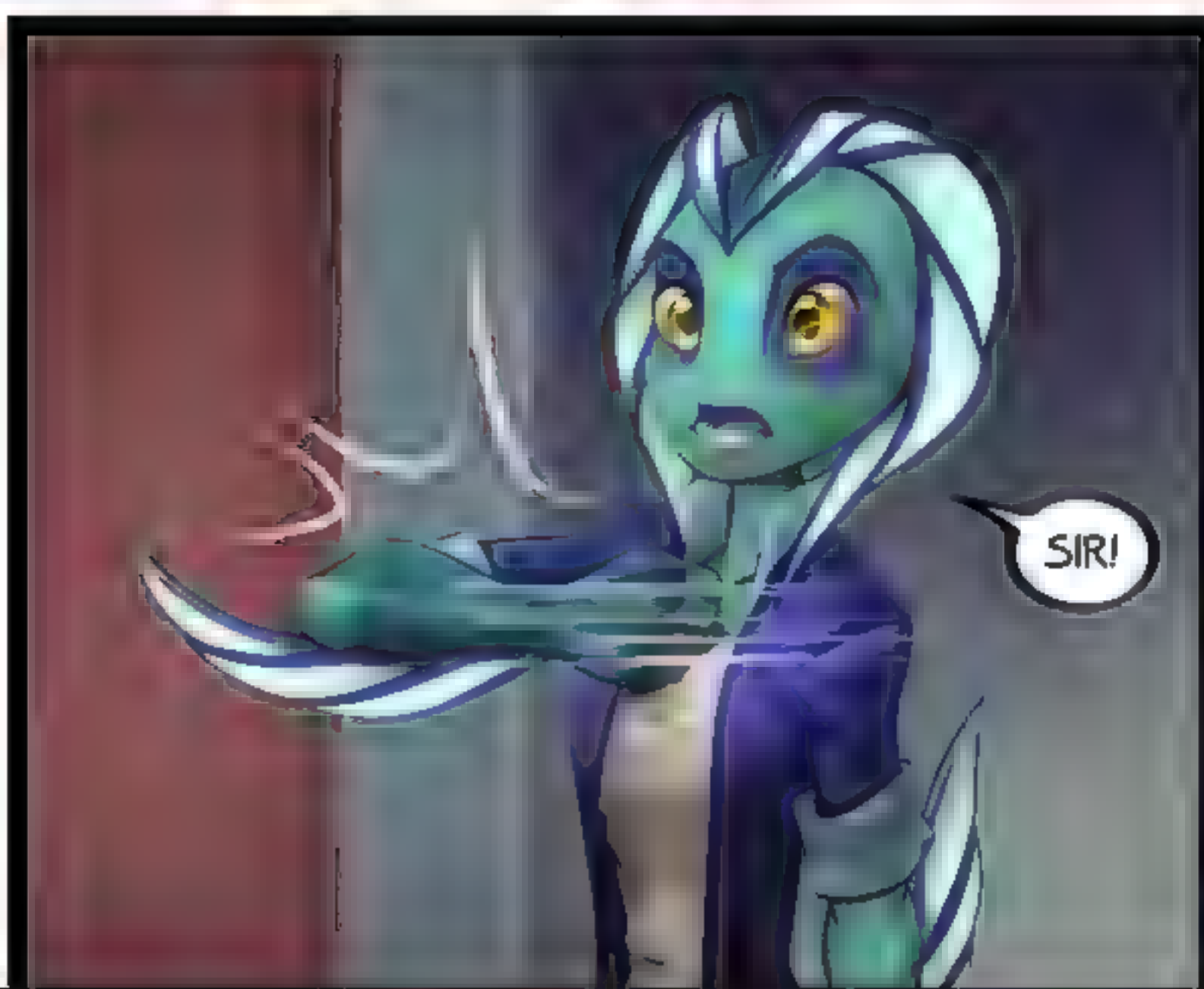
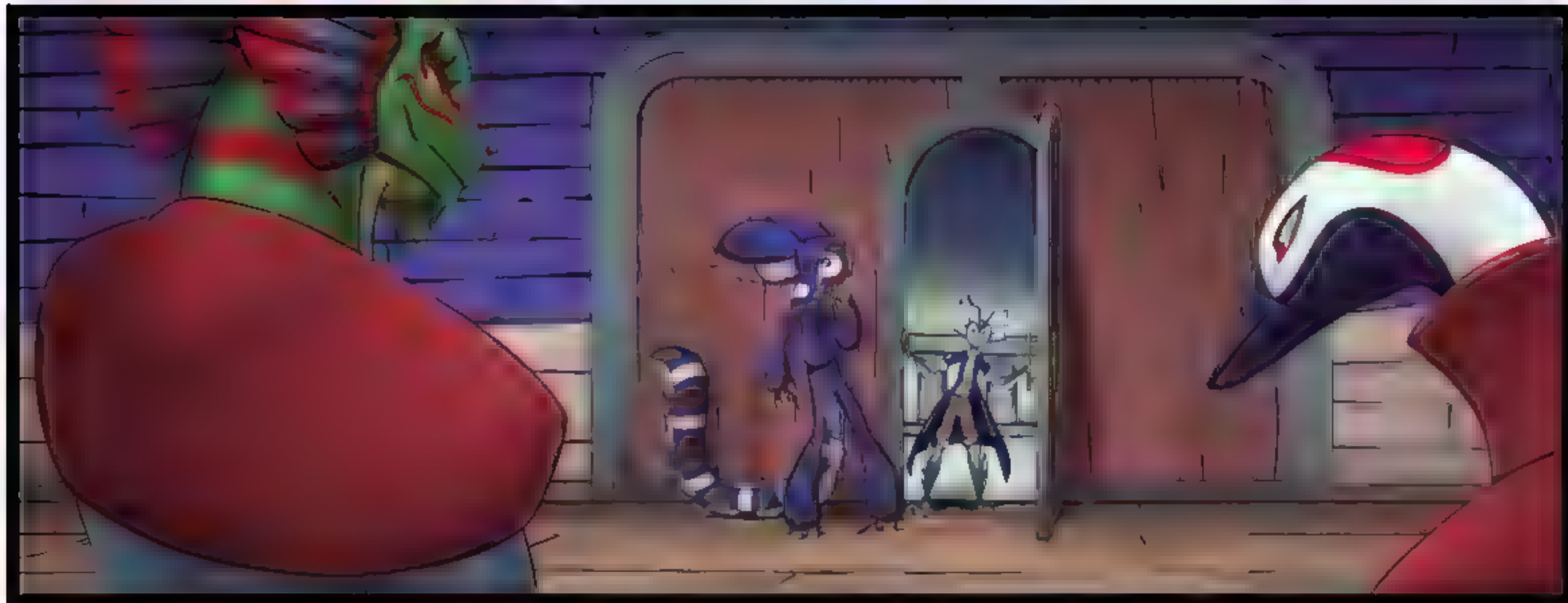
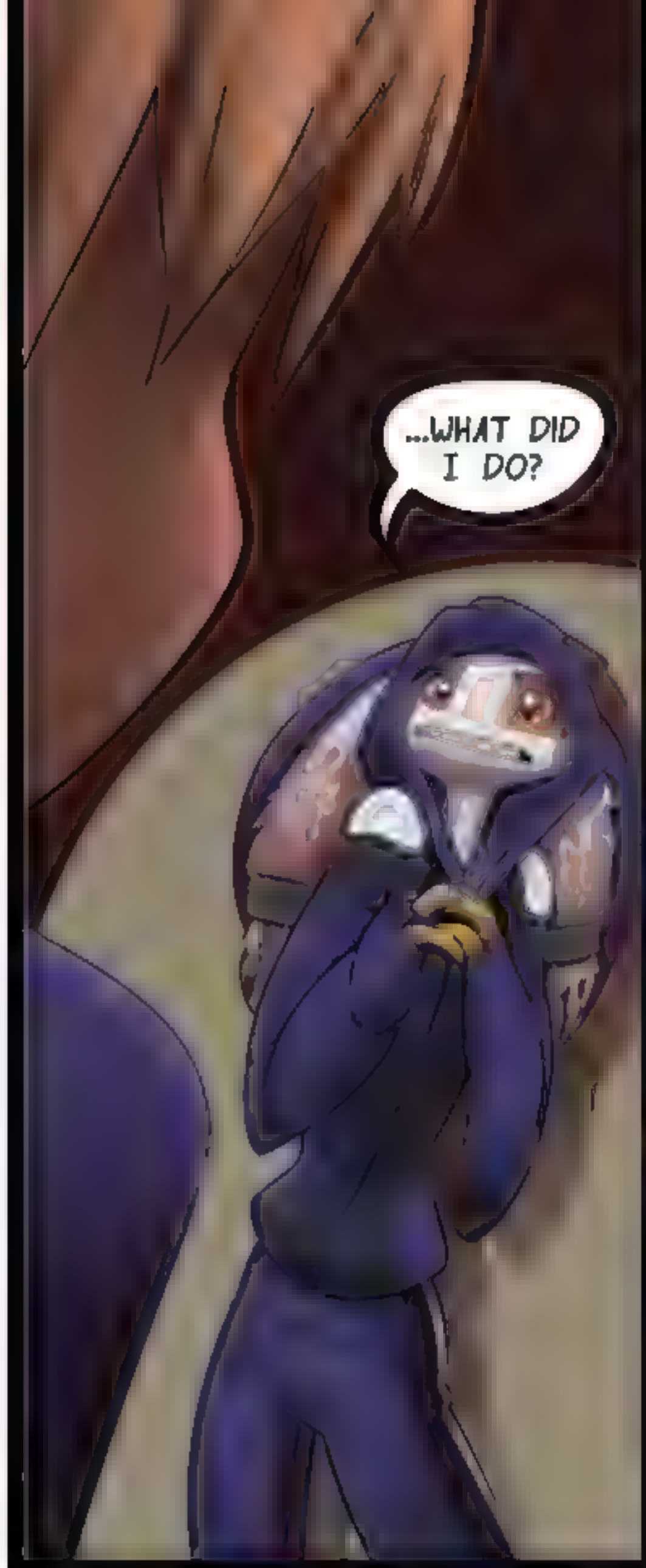
NNNN

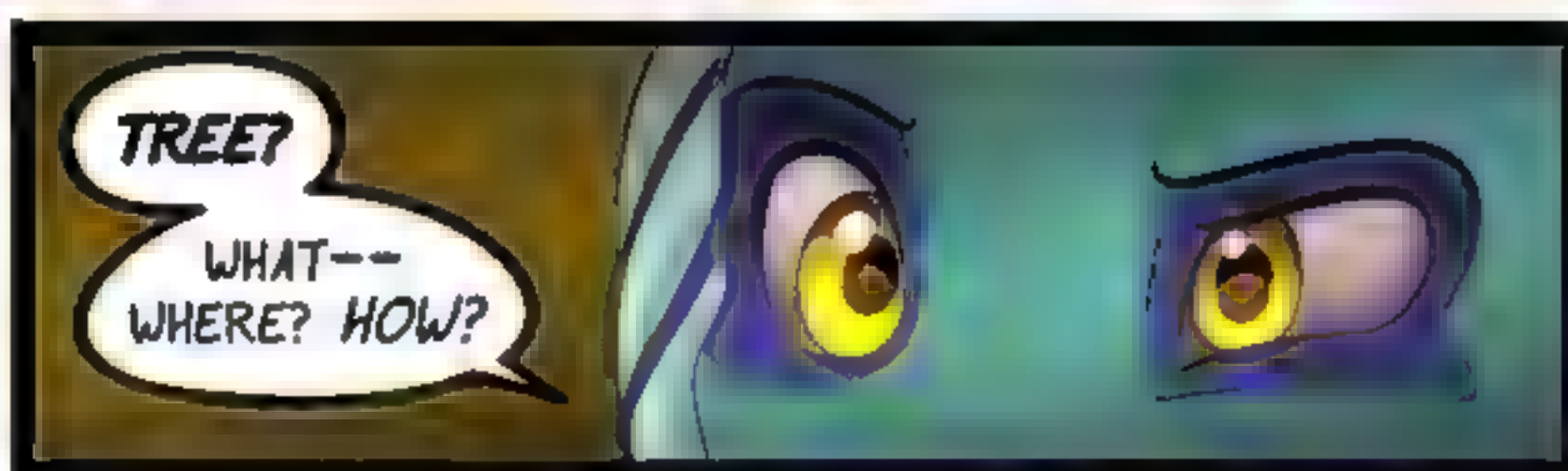
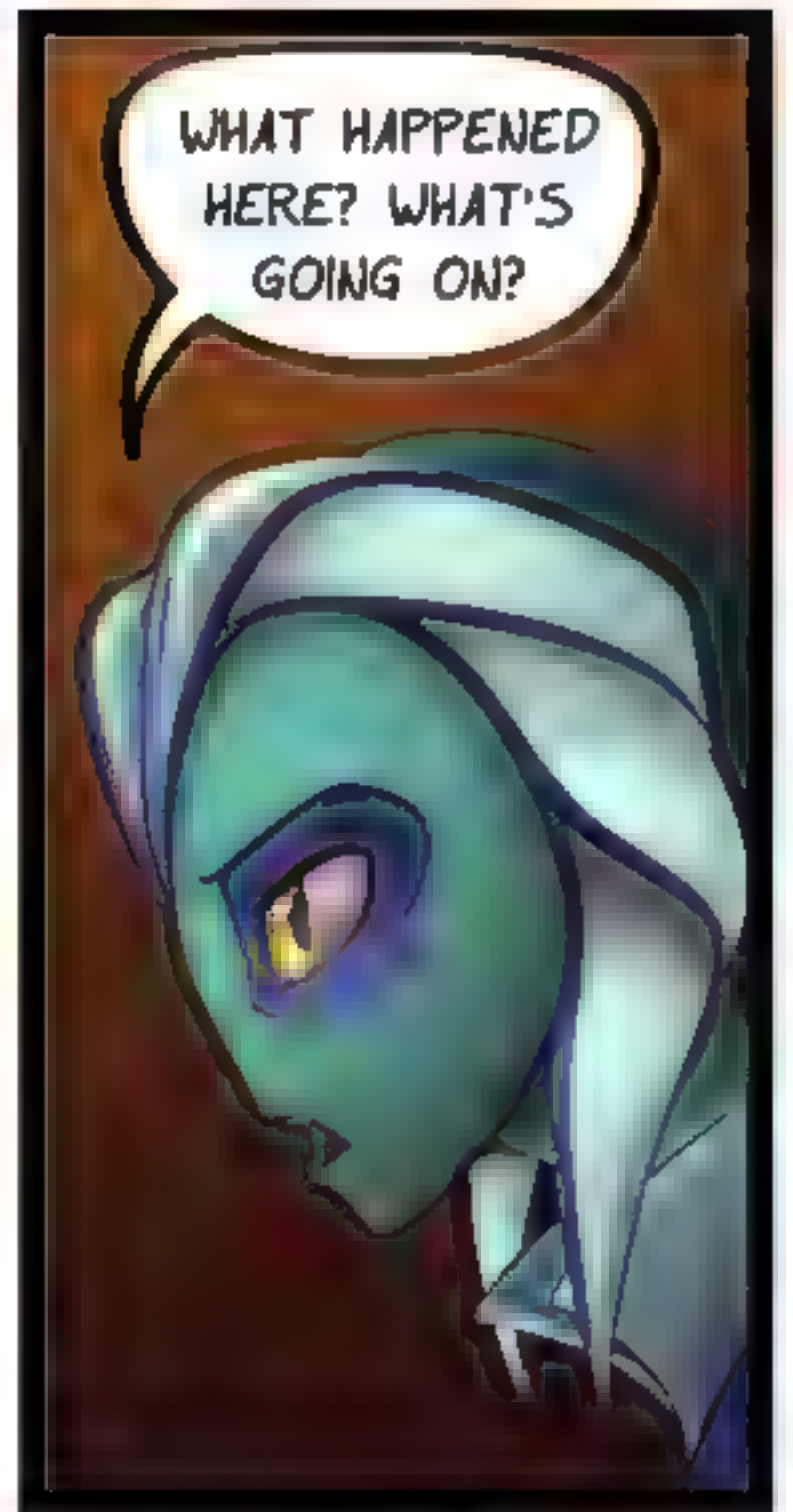
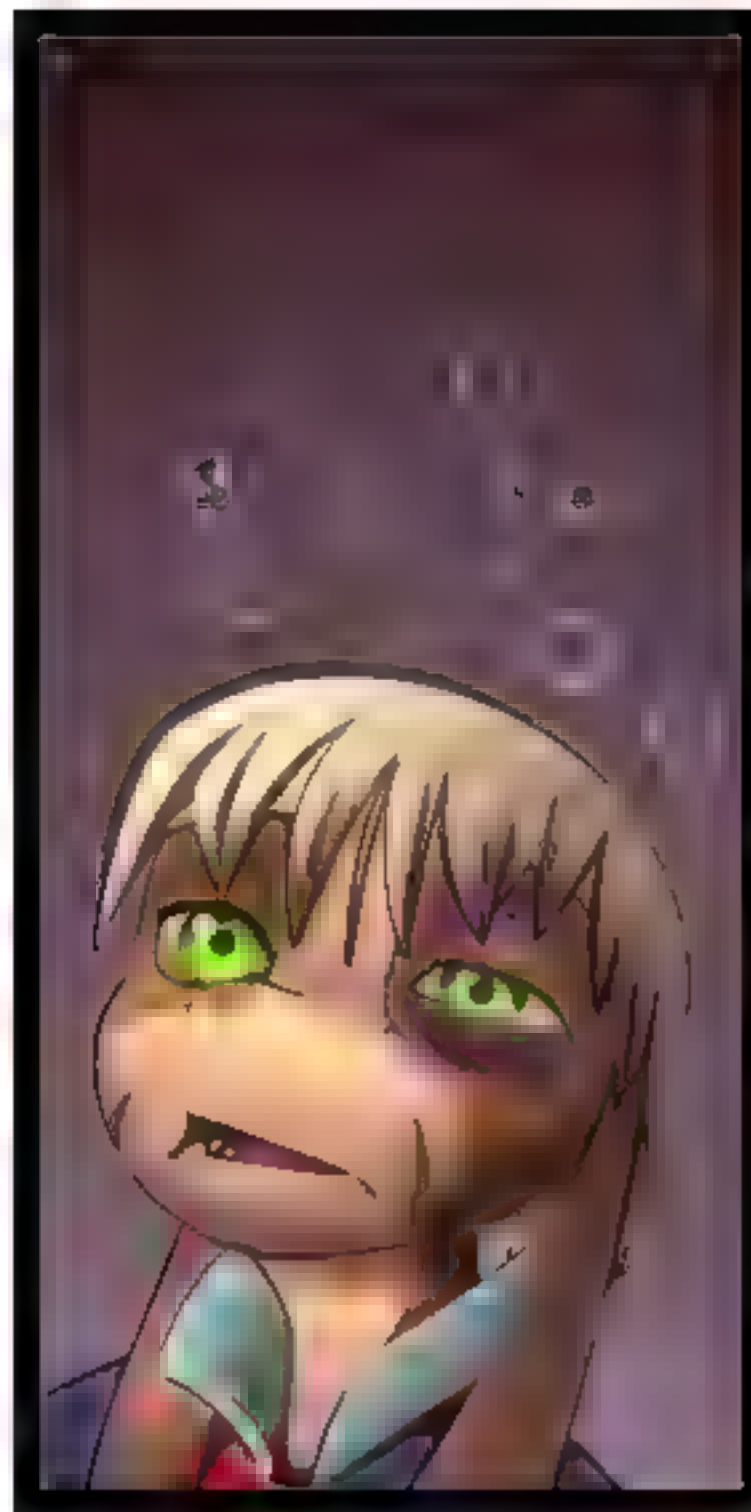
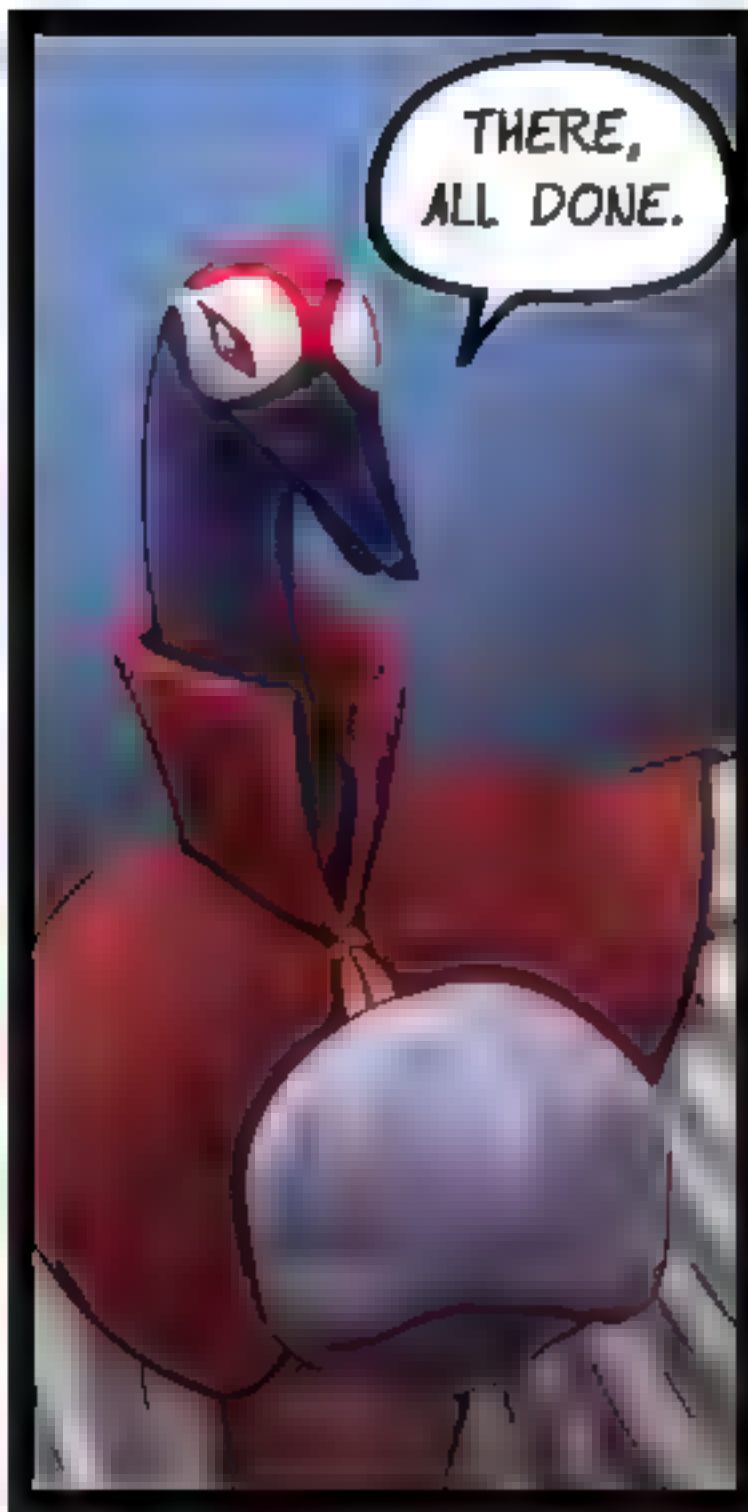
SHLUCK!



OHOOO BOY,
BONE-WARPING.
OUCH.









SHE SAID YOU HAD
AN ENCOUNTER WITH A
WINGED INTRUDER.

UH...

WELL, THAT'S
NEWS TO ME.

SEE? HE DOESN'T
REMEMBER-- IT'S JUST
LIKE THOSE KIDS I
TOLD YOU ABOUT!

YOU MEAN THE
STUDENTS FROM THE
LIST YOU **STOLE** FROM
AN ADMINISTRATIVE
DATABASE?

THE LIST CURRENTLY
SITTING ON THE HARD DRIVE
OF AN **UNENCRYPTED** AND
UNAUTHORIZED DEVICE?

WHICH YOU
BROKE?

AND WHICH I TAKE
FULL RESPONSIBILITY
FOR, YES! BUT THAT'S
NOT THE POINT--



THE **POINT** IS THAT SOMEONE BRAIN-WIPED THOSE KIDS SOMEHOW, AND NOW THEY GOT TO FALLAN, TOO!



KHEIL, WHAT YOU'RE DESCRIBING IS IMPOSSIBLE.

MEMORIES CANNOT BE ERASED, ALTERED, OR IN *ANY WAY* AFFECTED BY KHEN-RHO. THE BRAIN IS SIMPLY TOO COMPLEX, AND TOO POORLY UNDERSTOOD.

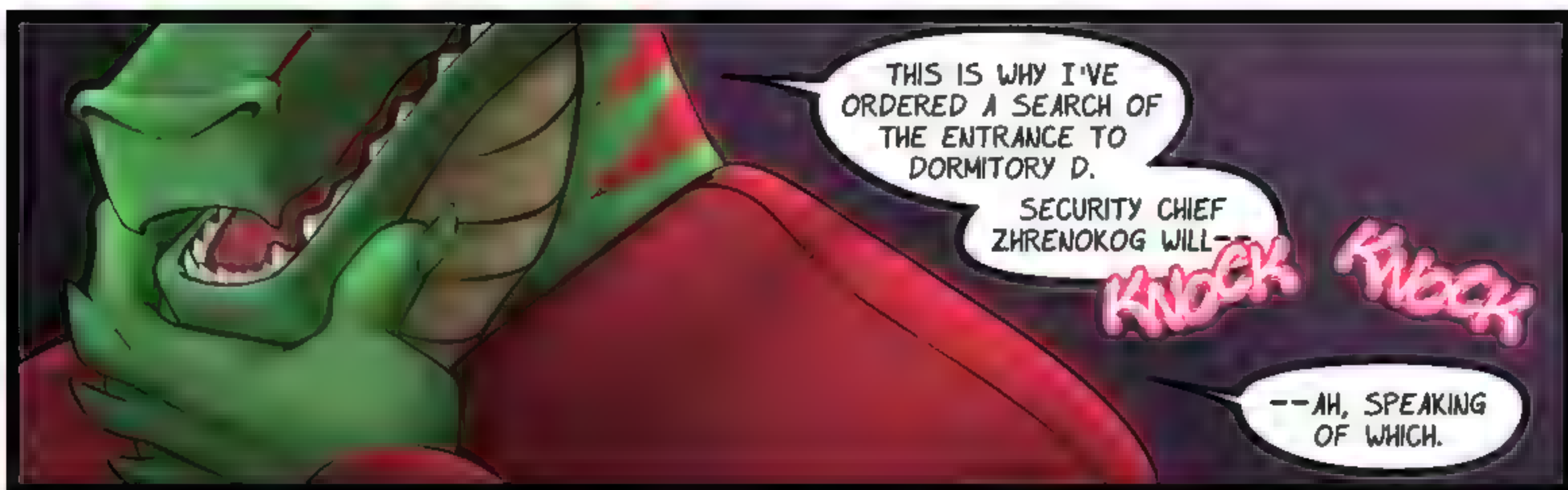
YOU'RE MORE LIKELY TO GIVE YOUR TEST SUBJECT A SEIZURE.

AND EVEN IF THERE EXISTED A DRUG THAT COULD ACCOMPLISH THIS, THERE IS NO CHANCE THAT IT COULD GO THROUGH SOMEONE'S SYSTEM IN THE TWO-HOUR WINDOW YOU'VE PROJECTED.

ESPECIALLY NOT WITHOUT LINGERING SIDE EFFECTS.



OKAY BUT WHAT IF SOMEONE SAID "SCREW THE LIMITS OF MODERN SCIENCE" AND **FIGURED OUT HOW TO DO IT ANYWAY?**



THIS IS WHY I'VE
ORDERED A SEARCH OF
THE ENTRANCE TO
DORMITORY D.

SECURITY CHIEF
ZHRENOKOG WILL--

Knock Knock

--AH, SPEAKING
OF WHICH.



SIR.

REPORTS ARE
COMING IN.

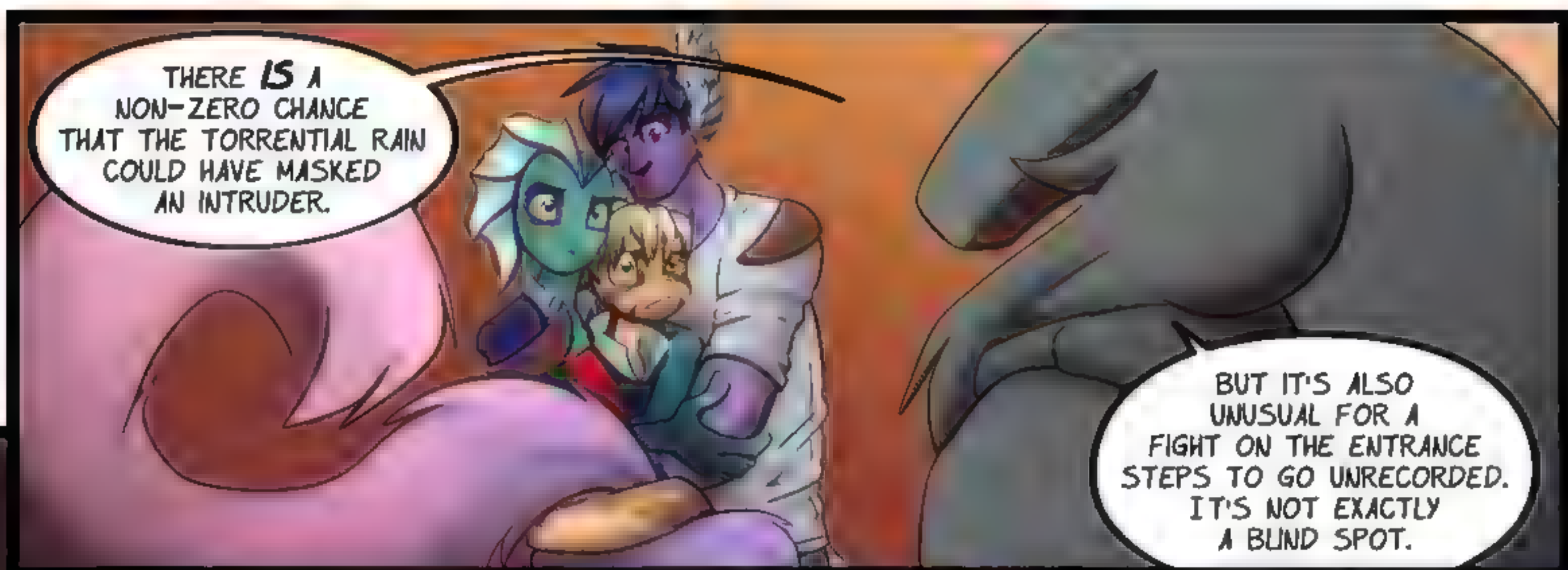


THE TECH TEAMS
HAVE ACCESSED DORM
D'S SECURITY CAMS, AND
ARE RUNNING PRELIMINARY
SCANS OF ALL FOOTAGE
FROM THE PAST THREE
HOURS OR SO.

INCLUDING THE
TIMEFRAME YOU
REQUESTED.



SO FAR
THEY'VE FOUND
NOTHING OUT
OF PLACE.



THERE *IS* A
NON-ZERO CHANCE
THAT THE TORRENTIAL RAIN
COULD HAVE MASKED
AN INTRUDER.

BUT IT'S ALSO
UNUSUAL FOR A
FIGHT ON THE ENTRANCE
STEPS TO GO UNRECORDED.
IT'S NOT EXACTLY
A BLIND SPOT.

I'VE ALSO SENT A
TEAM TO CHECK THE
AREA FOR EVIDENCE
OF A STRUGGLE.



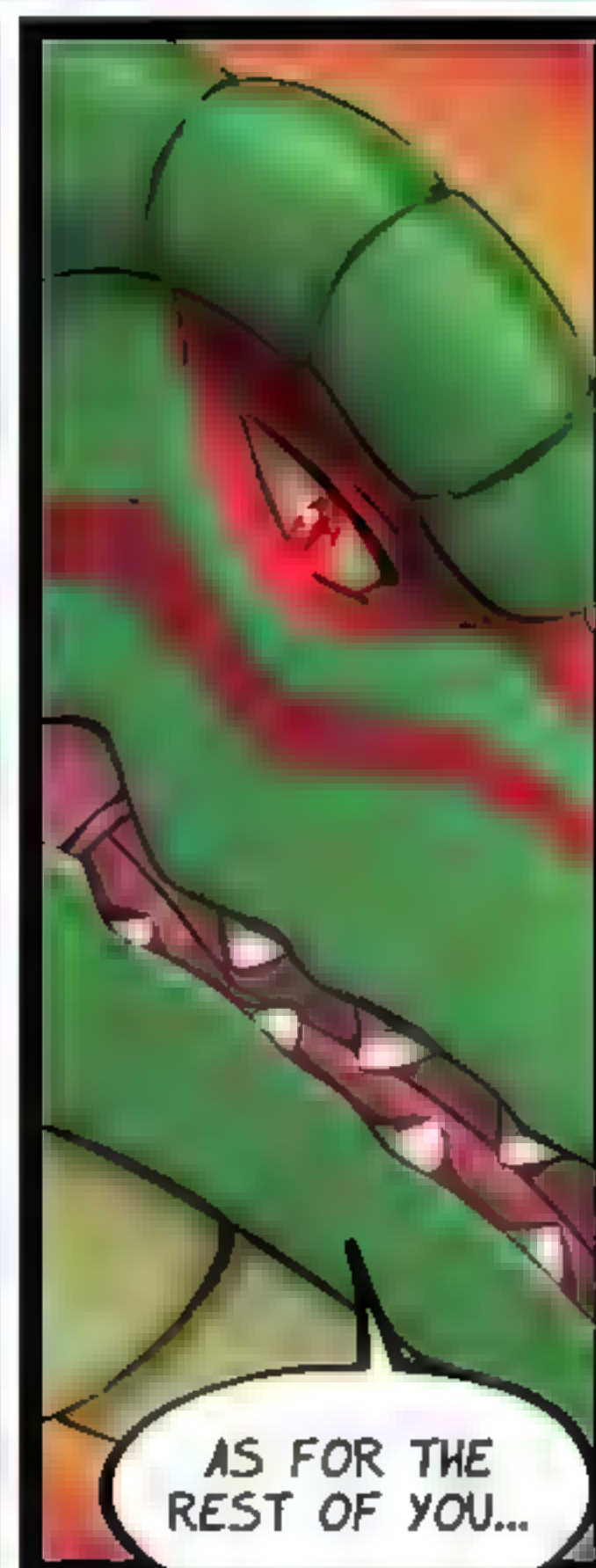
THEY'VE BEEN GIVEN A
DESCRIPTION OF FALLAN'S
PISTOL, AS PER YOUR
MESSAGE, SIR.

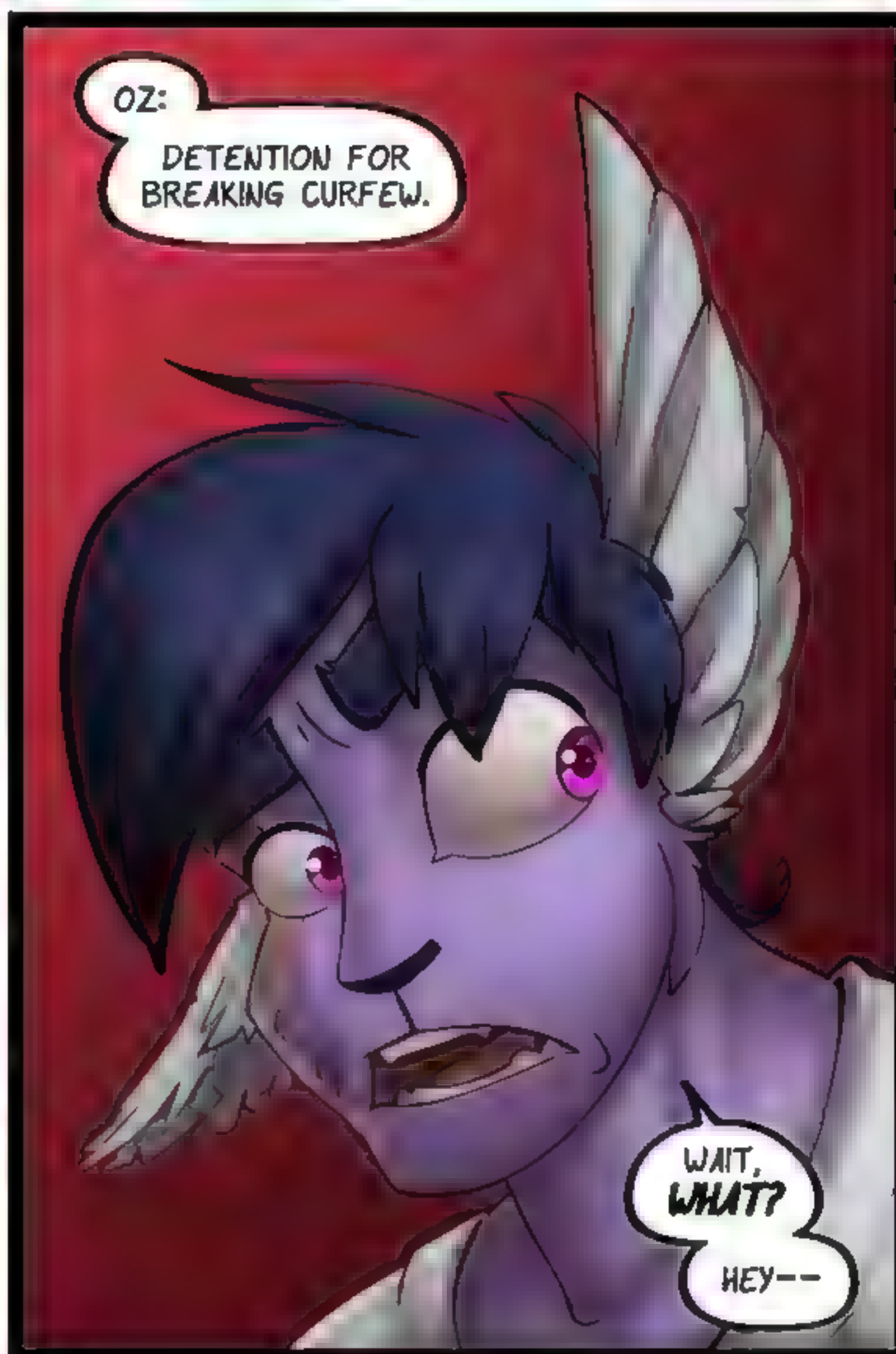
GOOD WORK,
CHIEF. WHAT HAVE
THEY FOUND?

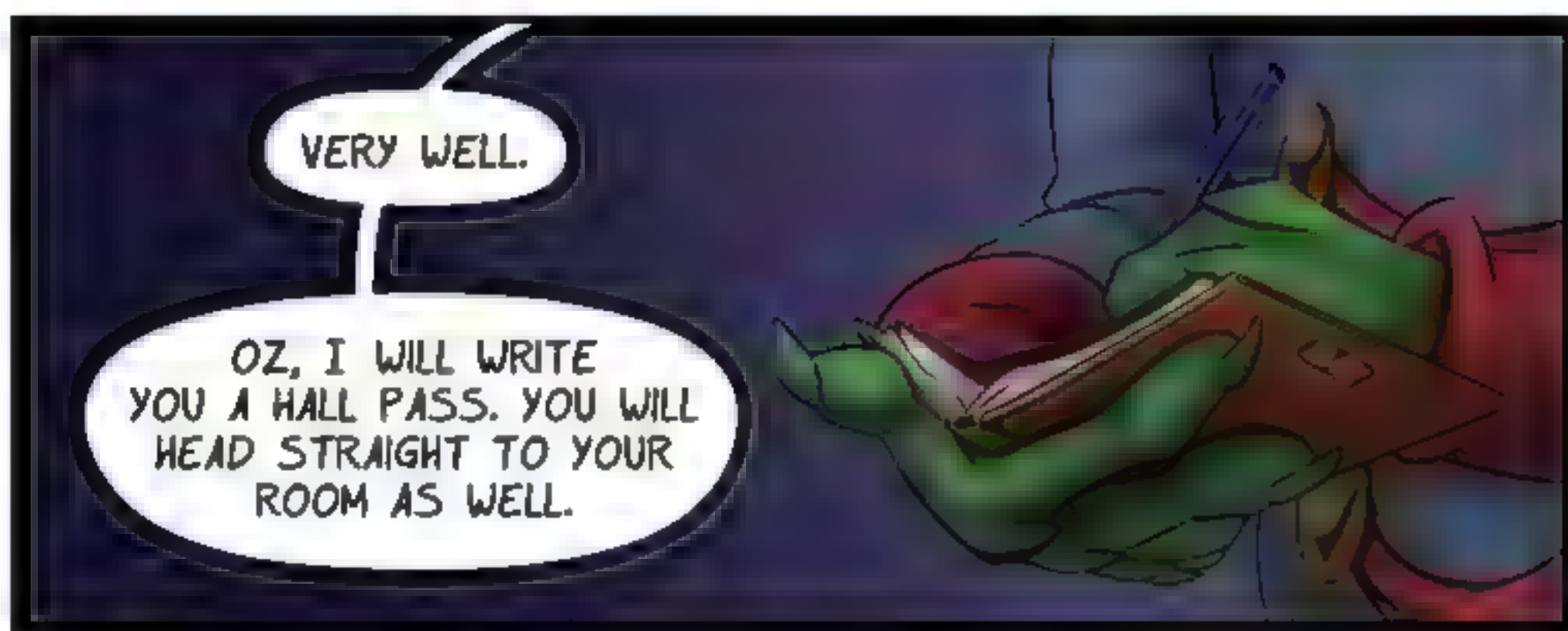
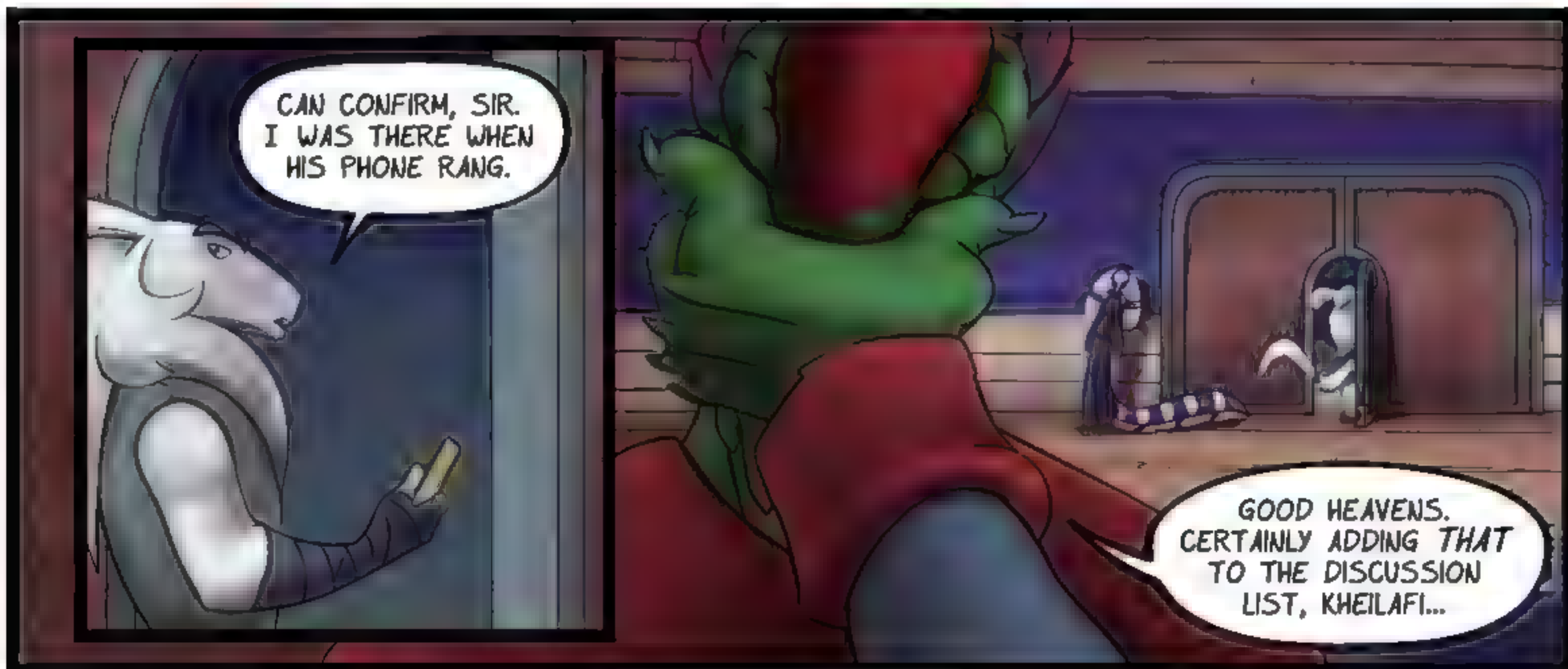
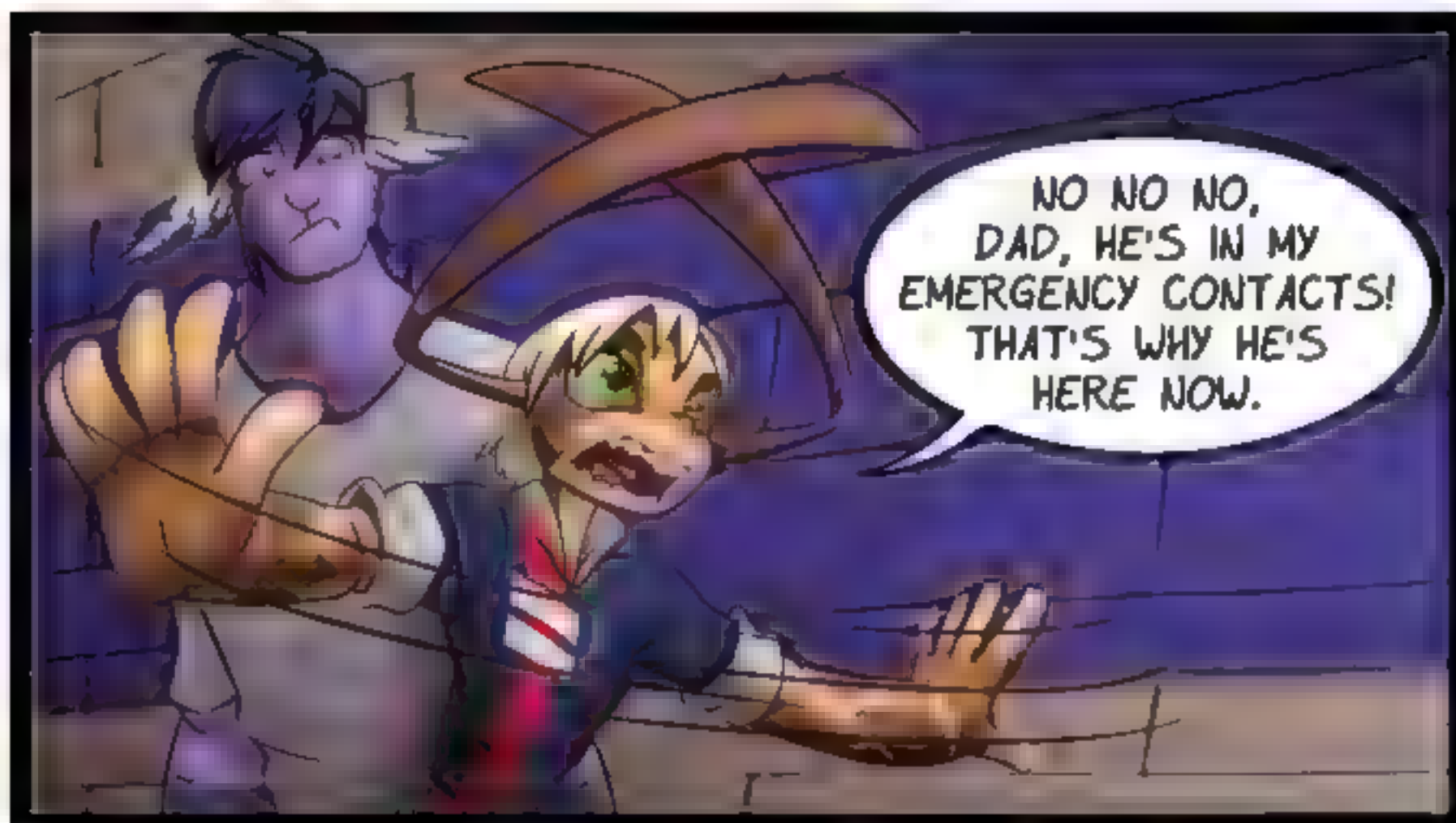


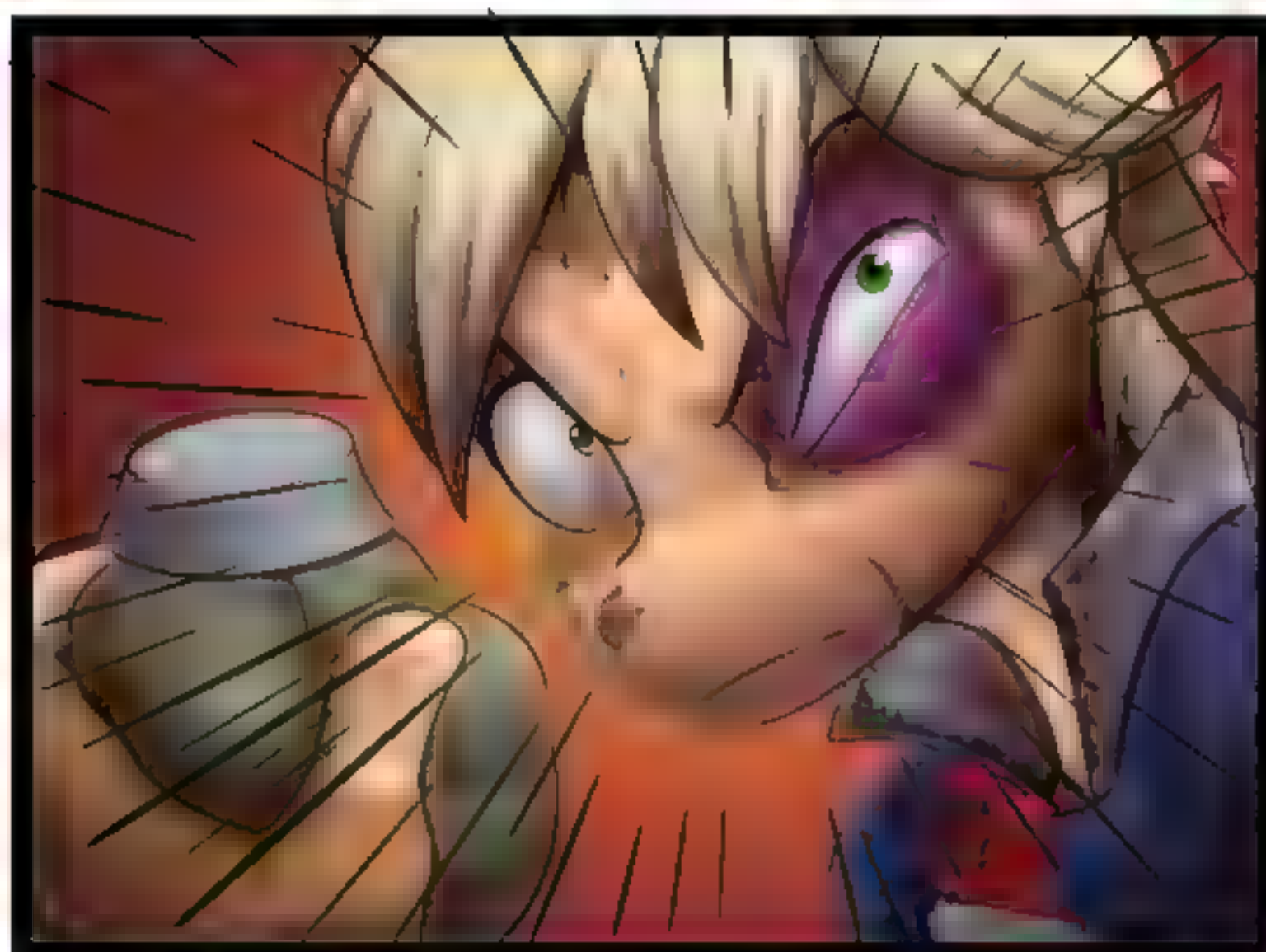
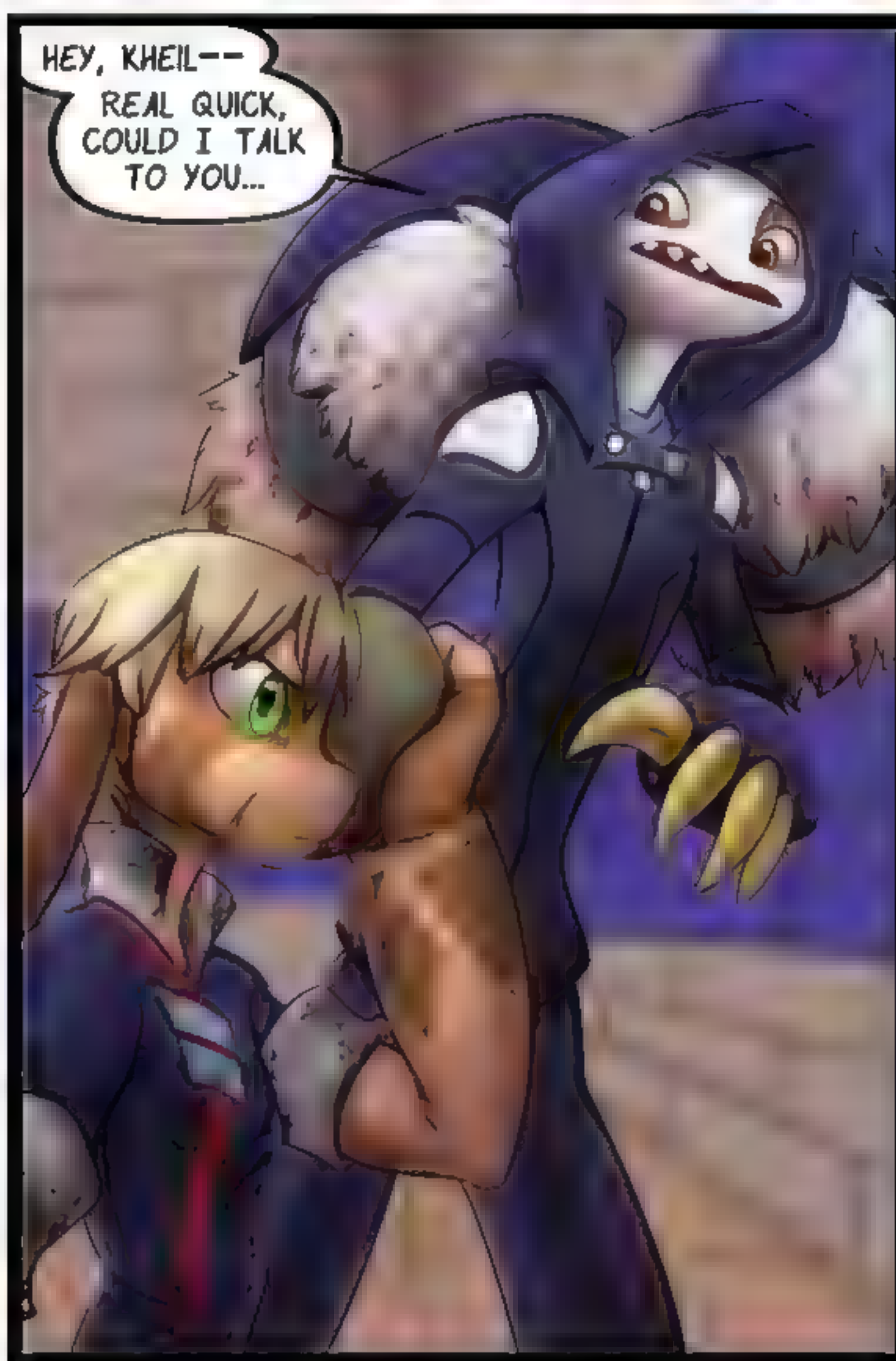
NOTHING, SIR.

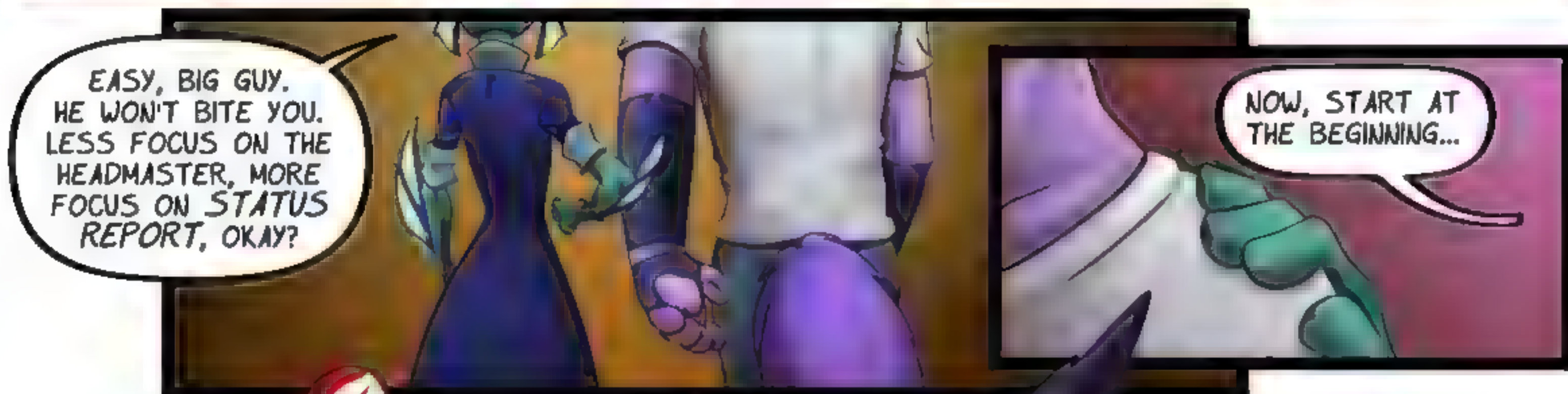
NO GUN, NO
SHELL CASINGS...
NOTHING.

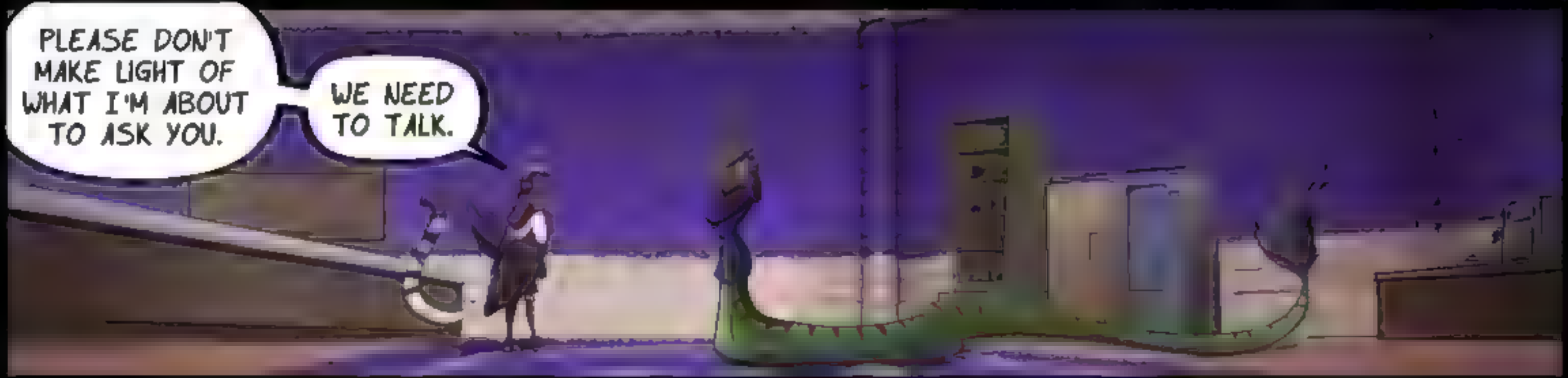










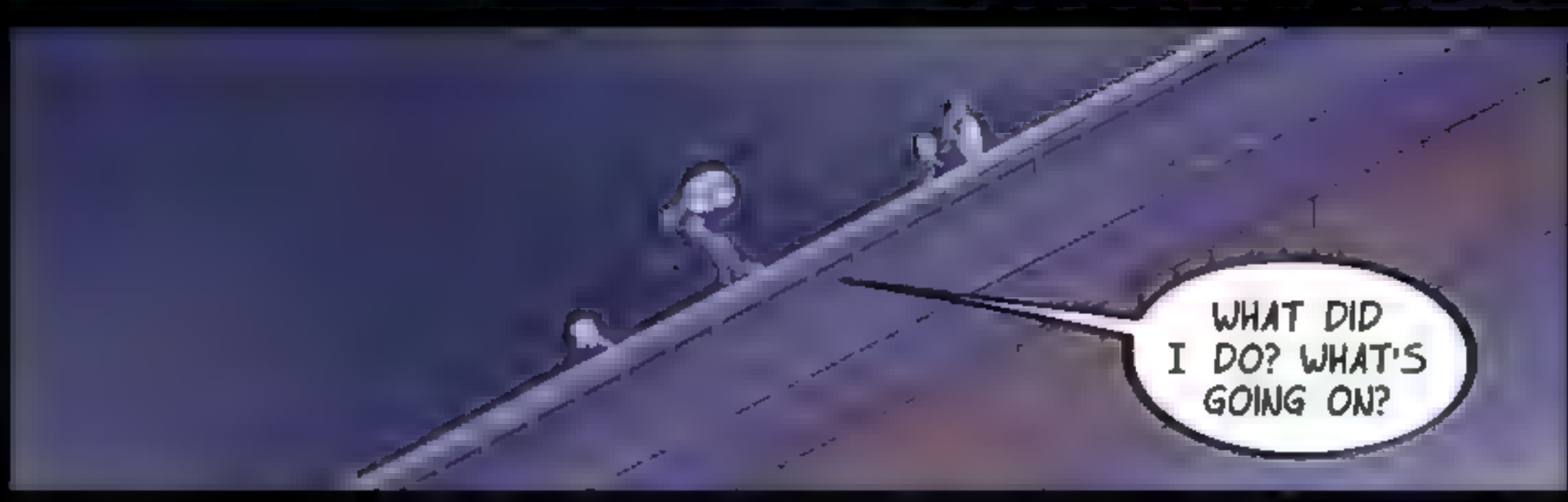


PLEASE DON'T
MAKE LIGHT OF
WHAT I'M ABOUT
TO ASK YOU.

WE NEED
TO TALK.



--KHEIL, COME
ON, JUST TALK
TO ME!



WHAT DID
I DO? WHAT'S
GOING ON?



KHEIL?

KHEIL!

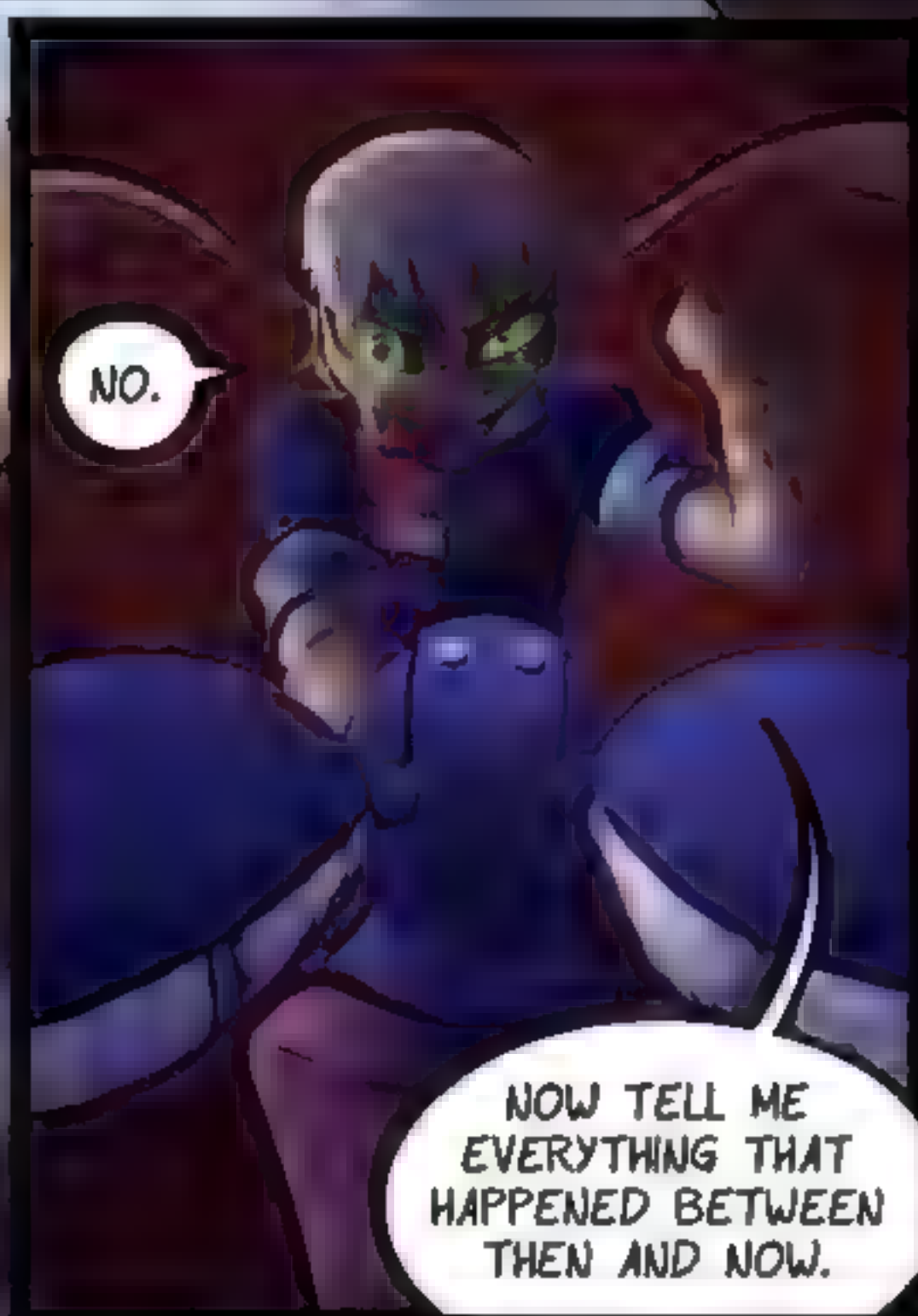
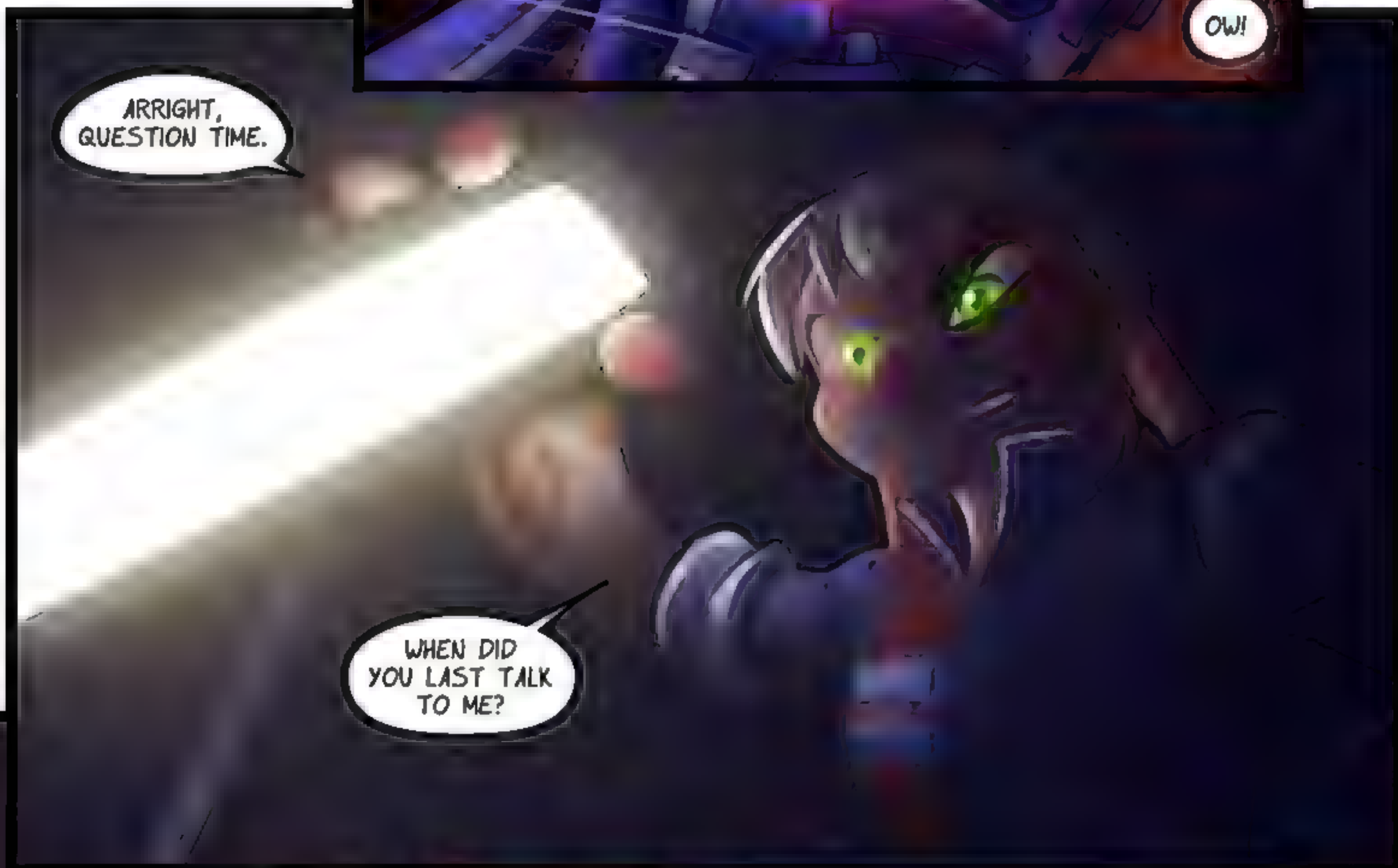
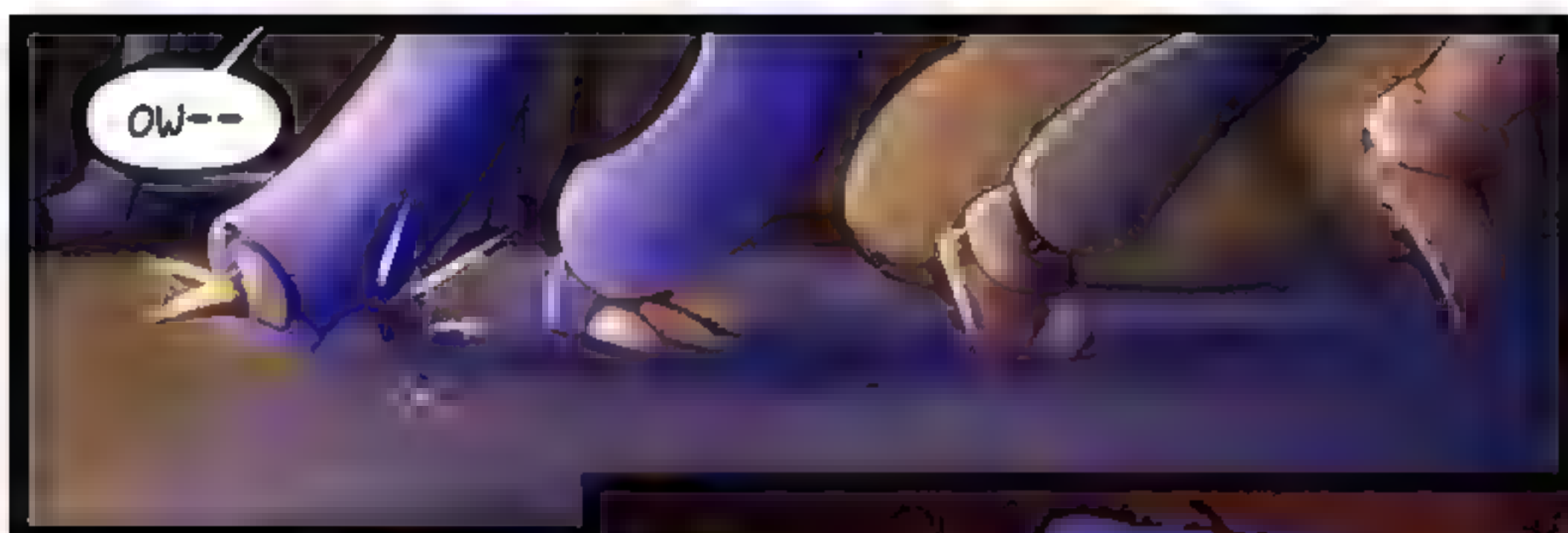


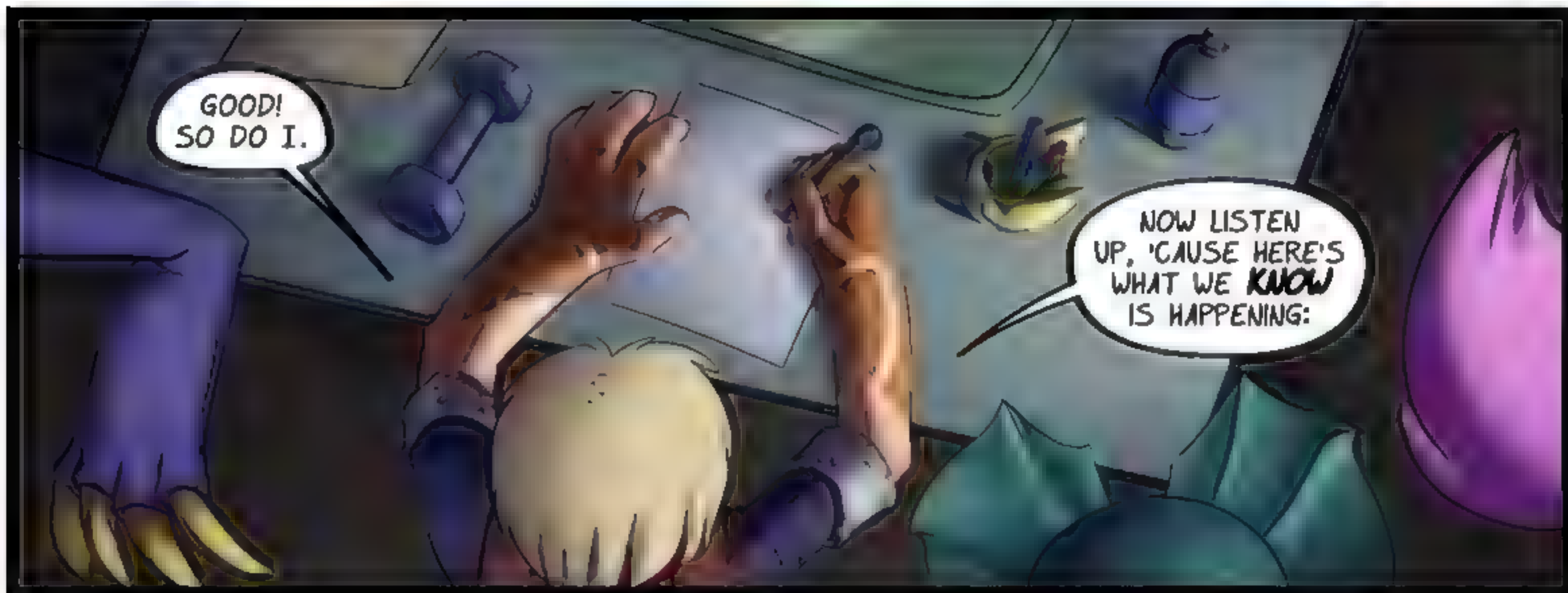
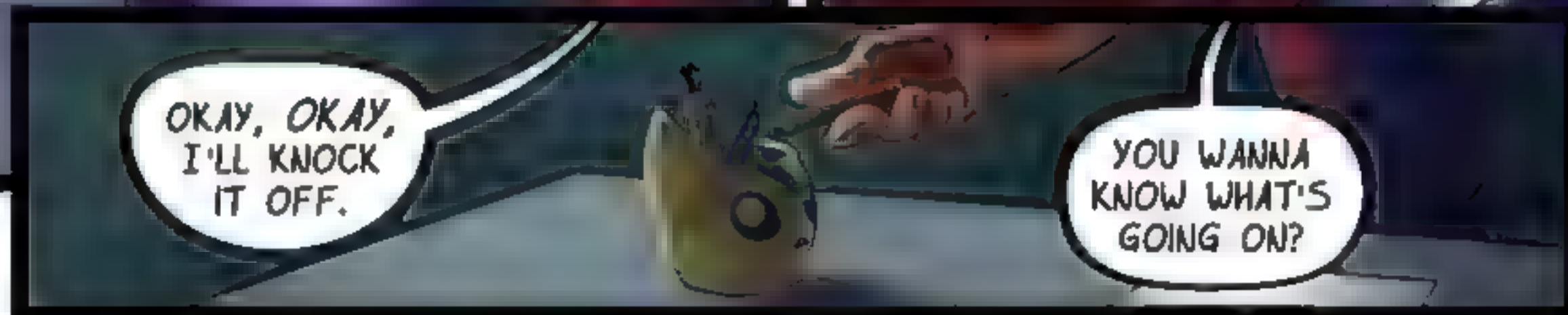
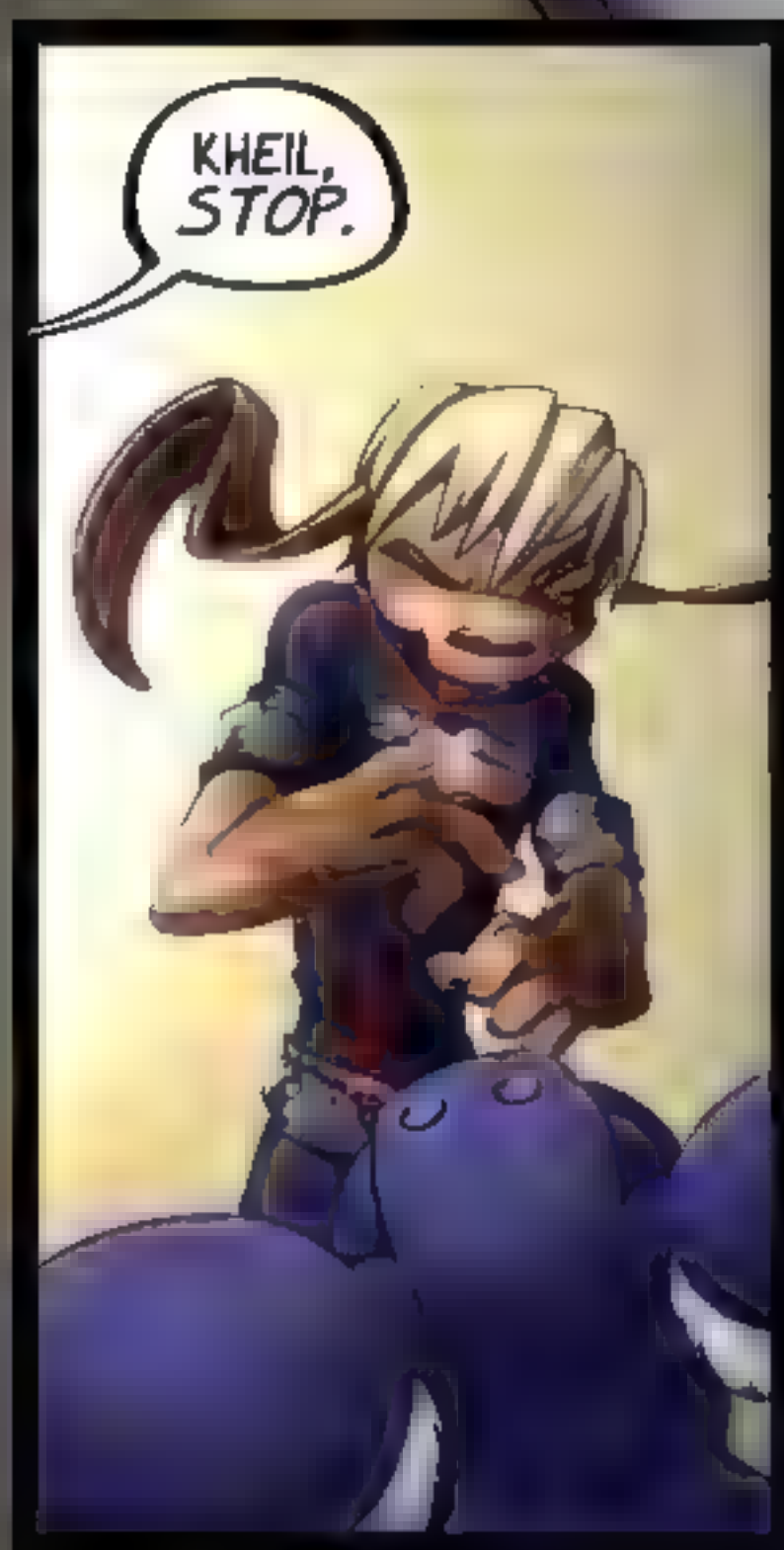
AT LEAST
EXPLAIN HOW
YOU MANAGED TO
HIT YOUR HEAD
ON A TREE!



WHY ARE YOU
ACTING LIKE A
STRANGER?









ONE: WE KNOW THAT THE LADY WHO REPLACED THE OLD GYM TEACHER IS THOTZEV ZHTATZGHA.

SHE'S A RHO-DA AGNA.

TWO: WE KNOW SEVEN STUDENTS SKIPPED CLASSES, AND DON'T REMEMBER HOW. OR WHY.

WE *DON'T* KNOW IF THOSE SEVEN ARE THE ONLY ONES.

THREE: ONE OF THEM SAYS HE REMEMBERS TWO WEIRD THINGS--

A ROOM FULL OF "PEOPLE IN COMBAT GEAR," AND A VOICE TALKING TO HIM.

IT'S POSSIBLE THIS MEANS HE WAS KIDNAPPED BY SOME ARMED INTRUDERS. AND IF HE WAS, IT'S LIKELY THE OTHERS WERE, TOO.

FOUR: FALLAN WAS DEFINITELY KIDNAPPED BY AN ARMED INTRUDER AND DEFINITELY DOES NOT REMEMBER IT.

NO, KHEIL, I *DON'T!* WHAT--

LET ME FINISH!

MY POINT IS: DAD'S NOT WRONG. BRAIN-WIPING SOUNDS PRETTY IMPOSSIBLE.

BUT THESE "INTRUDERS" DIDN'T NECESSARILY HAVE TO WIPE ANYONE'S BRAINS. WHAT IF THOSE KIDS AREN'T WHO THEY SAY THEY ARE?

WHAT IF THEY'RE KHEN-RHO ILLUSIONS, OR DISGUISED SOMEHOW?

WHAT IF *YOU'RE* NOT THE REAL FALLAN?



OKAY. YOU KNOW WHAT? THAT'S STUPIDER THAN USUAL, KHEIL.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED?

I WAITED RIGHT WHERE WE AGREED TO MEET UP. GOT THERE AT 7:30.

TEN MINUTES LATER IT STARTED RAINING, BUT I COULDN'T GO INSIDE WITHOUT YOUR I.D., SO I HUNG OUT UNDER THE AWNING AND TEXTED YOU.

EVENTUALLY **YOU** STOPPED TEXTING BACK!

SO AROUND 9:00, I GAVE UP ON THE IDEA THAT YOU'D SOMEHOW KEEP YOUR PROMISE THIS TIME, AND I WENT BACK TO MY ROOM AND **SLEPT**.

AT SOME POINT YOUR PHONE-S.O.S WOKE ME UP.

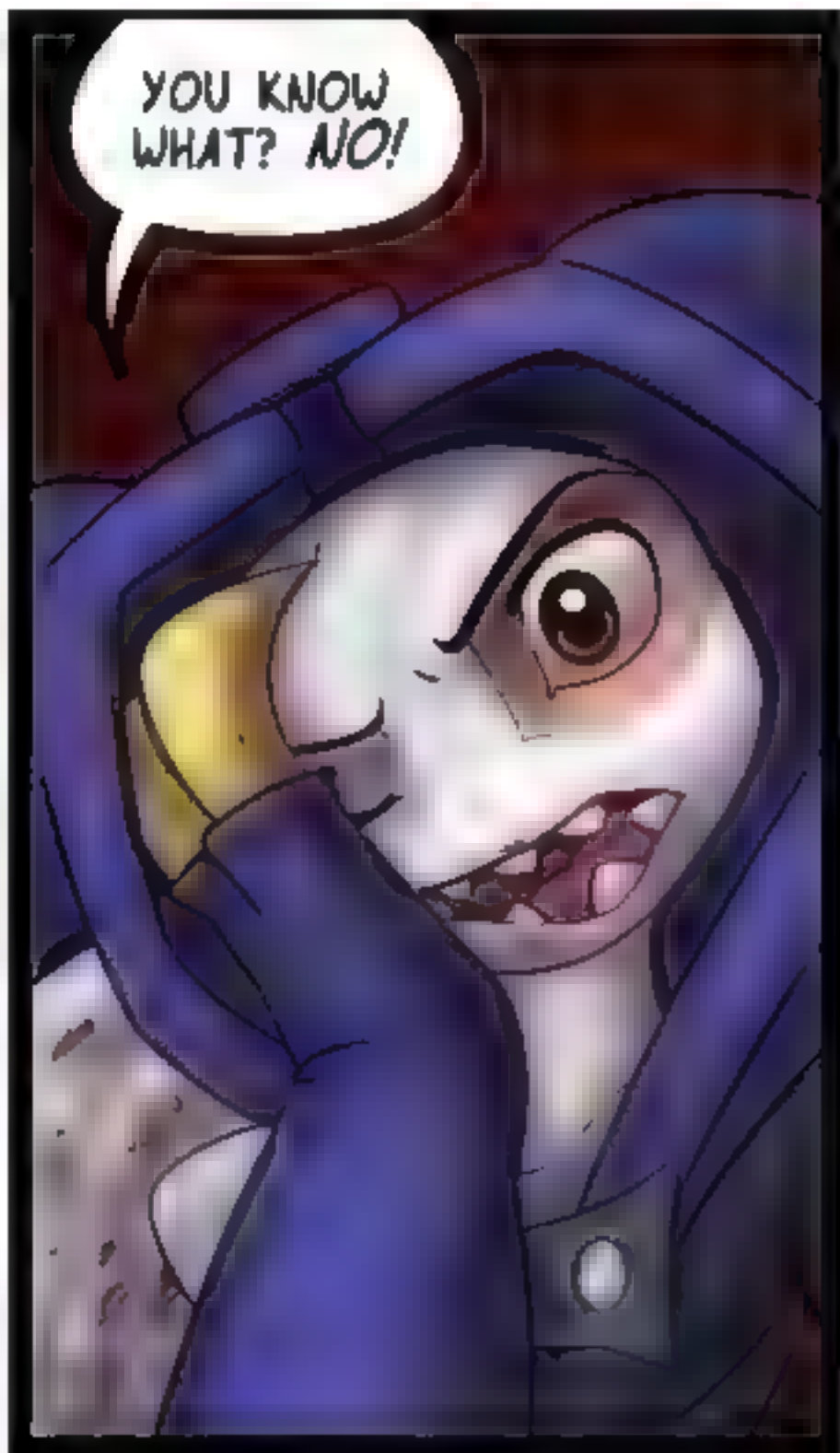
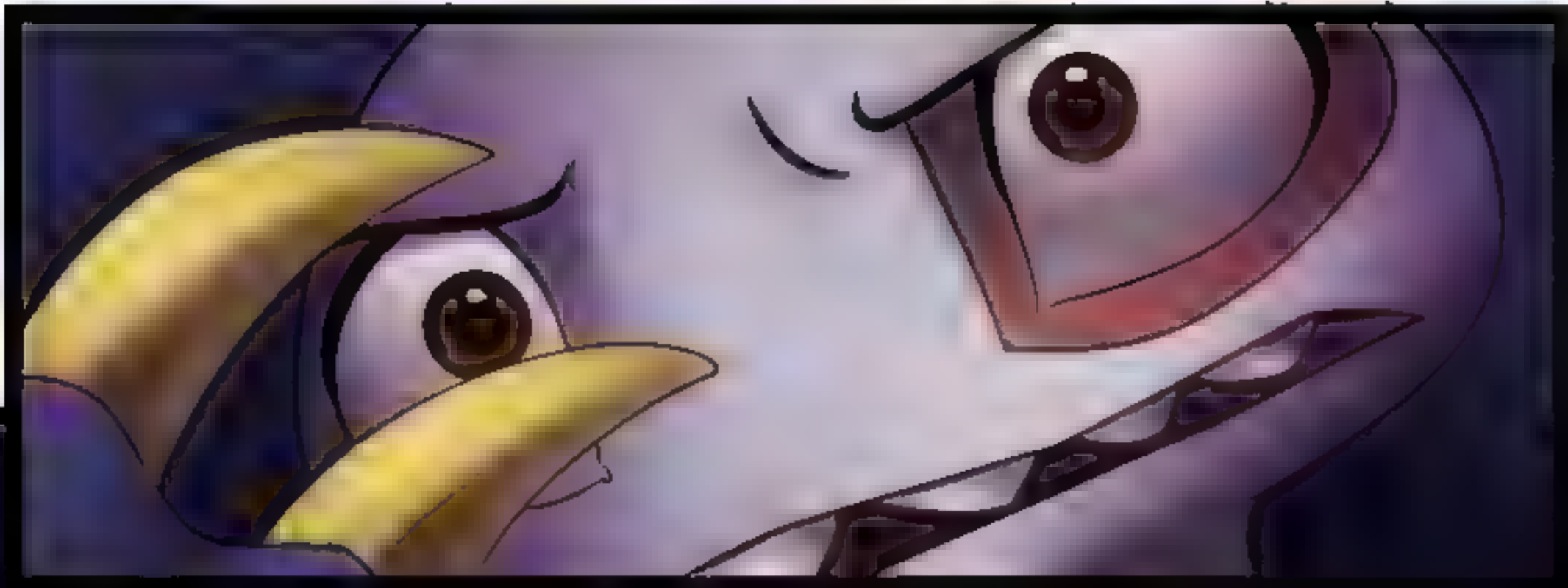
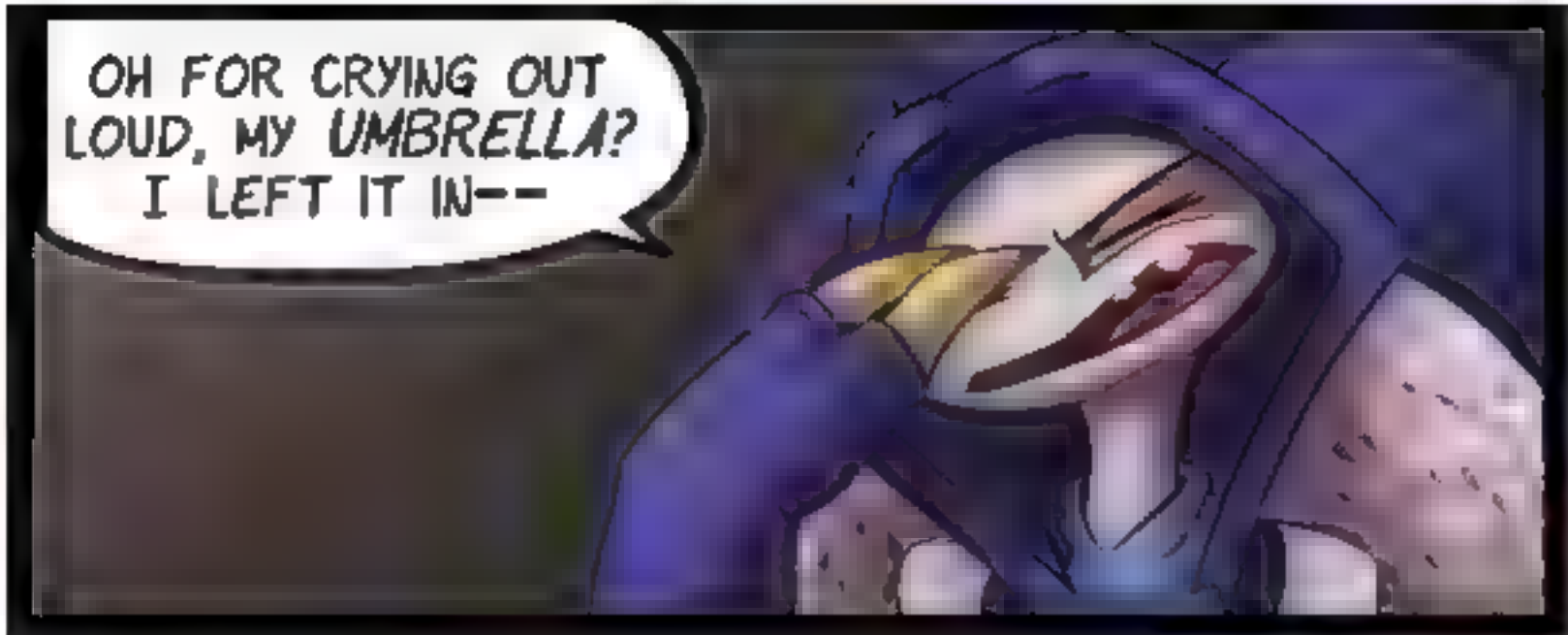
SATISFIED?

TEAM SIX TO TOWER TWO: AREA SEARCHED, NO SIGN OF FIREARMS PRESENT.

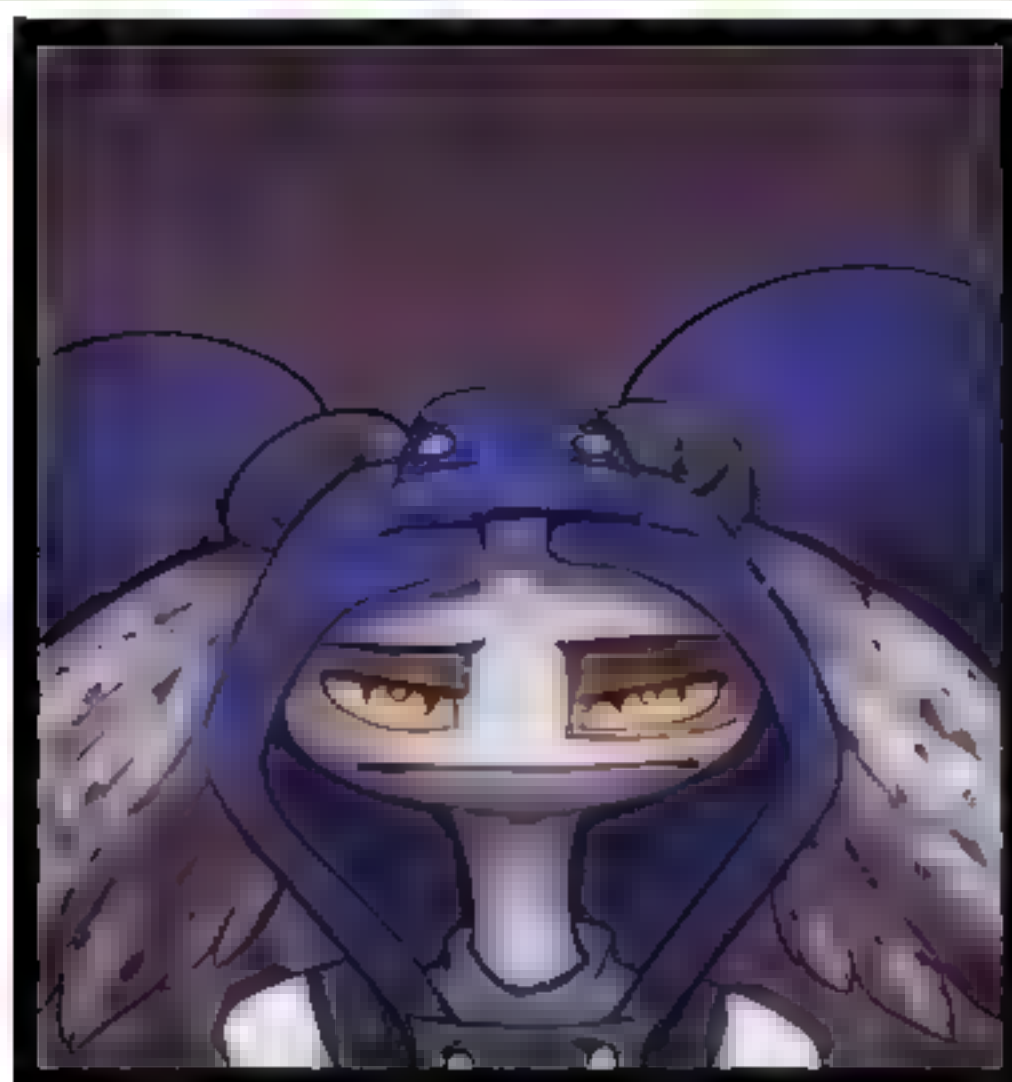
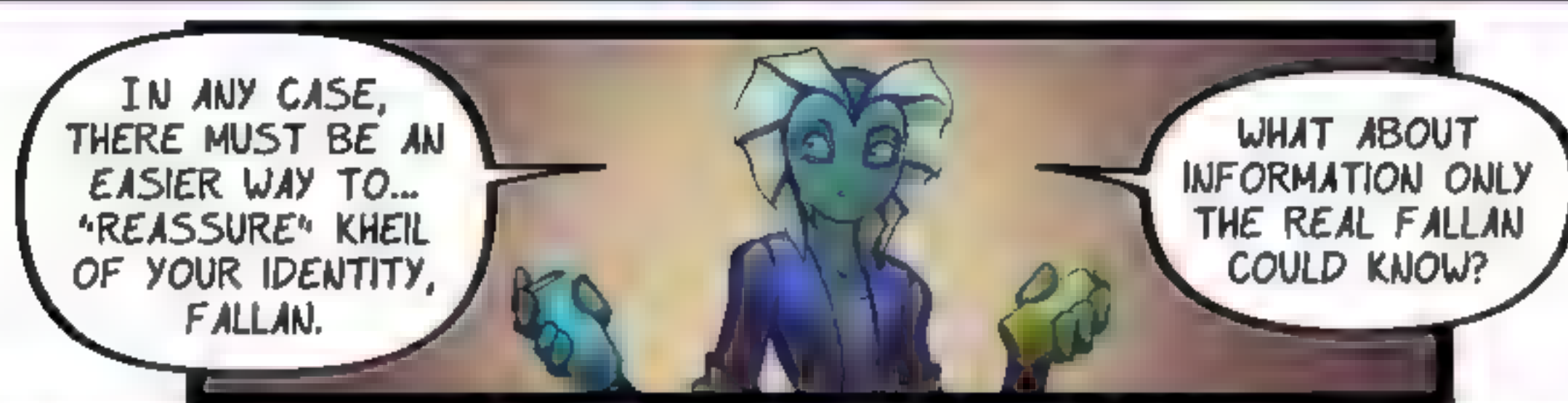
THE DOOR LOG'S MOST RECENT ENTRY CHECKED THEM IN AT 13:27.

I'M NOT SATISFIED! YOUR STORY HAS PLOT HOLES IN IT.

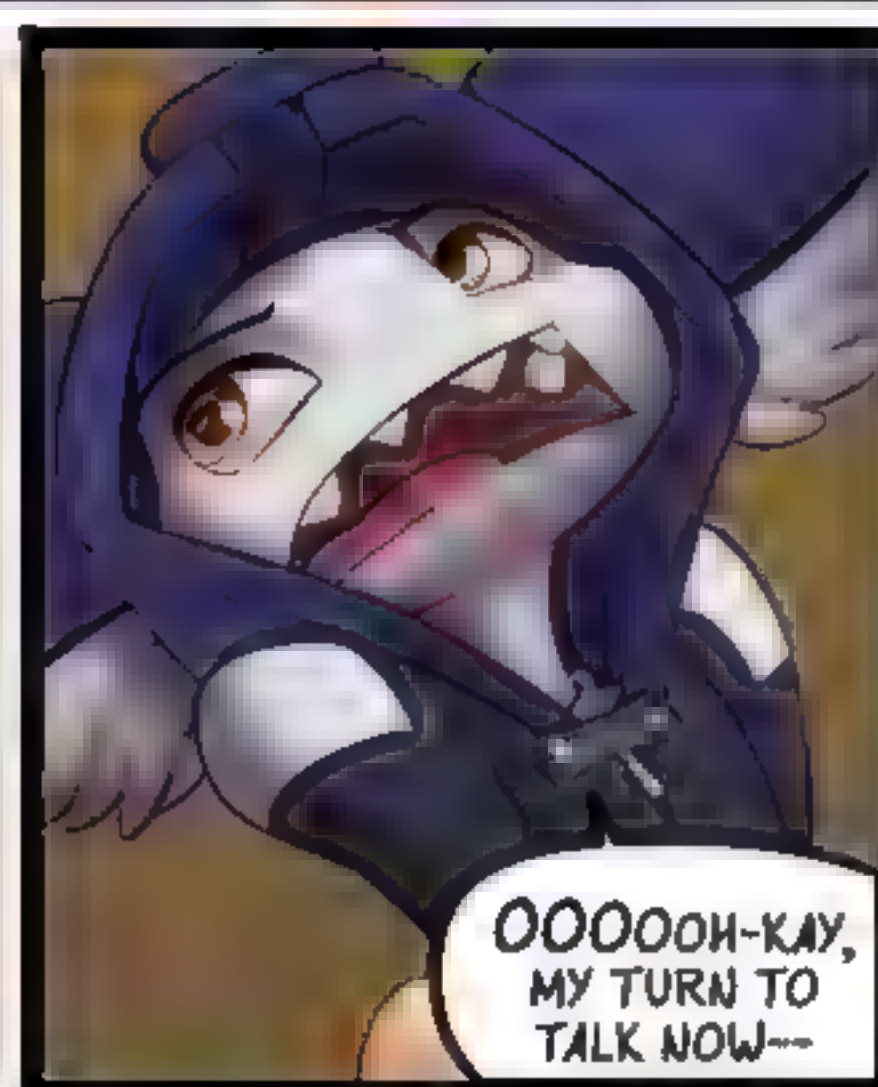
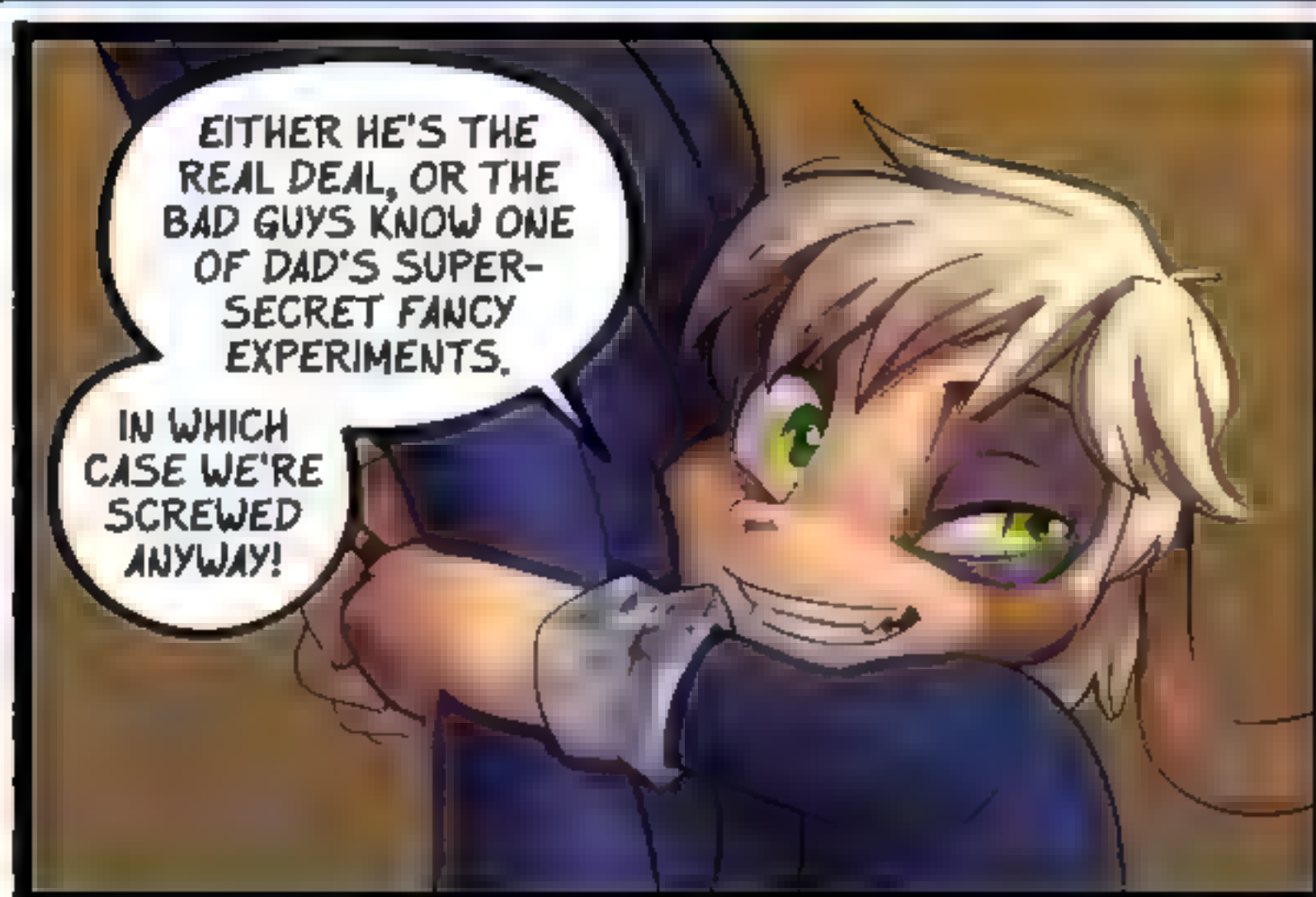
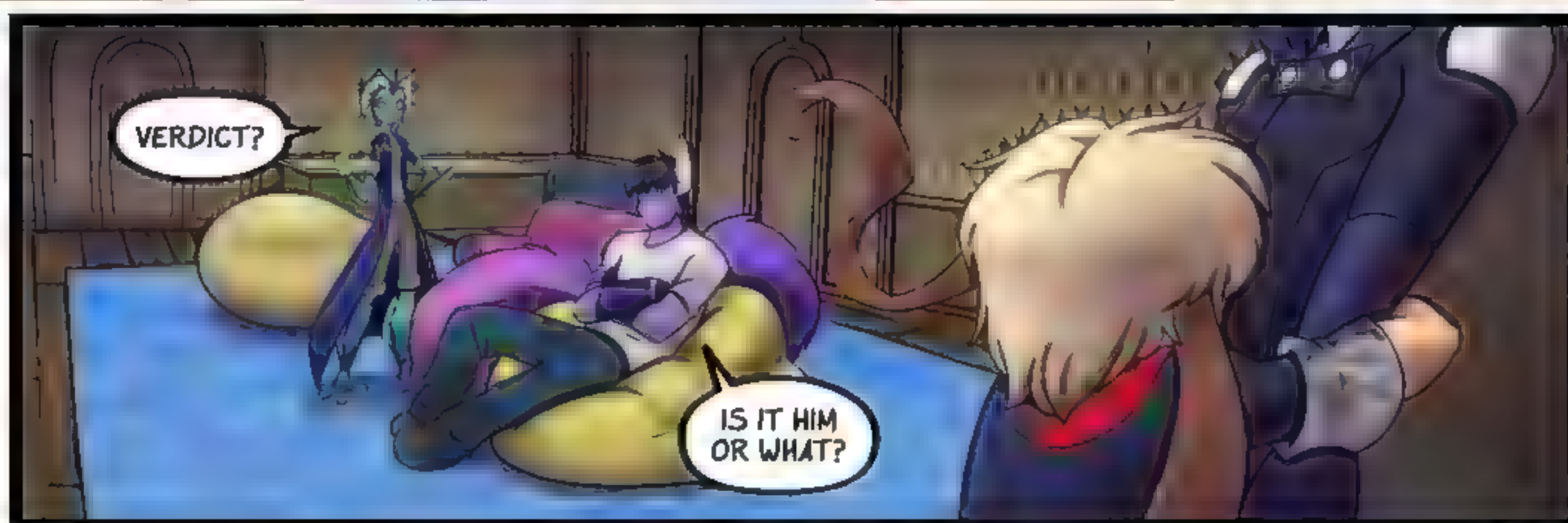
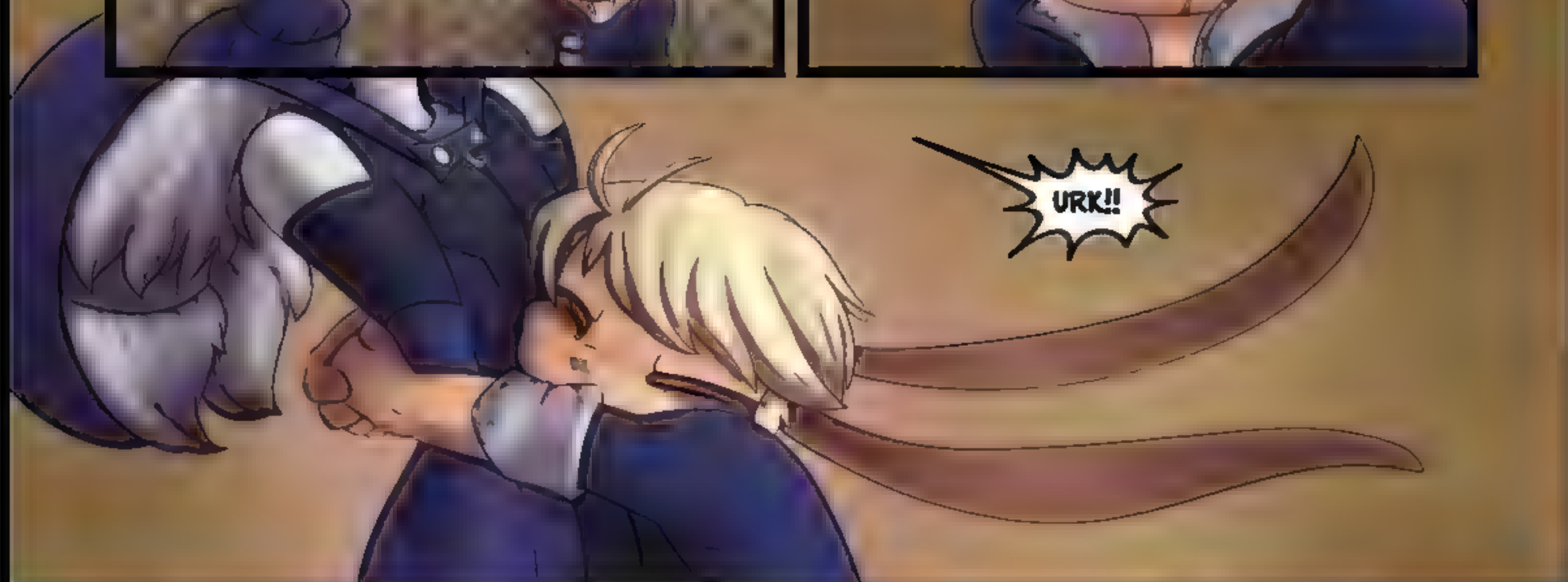
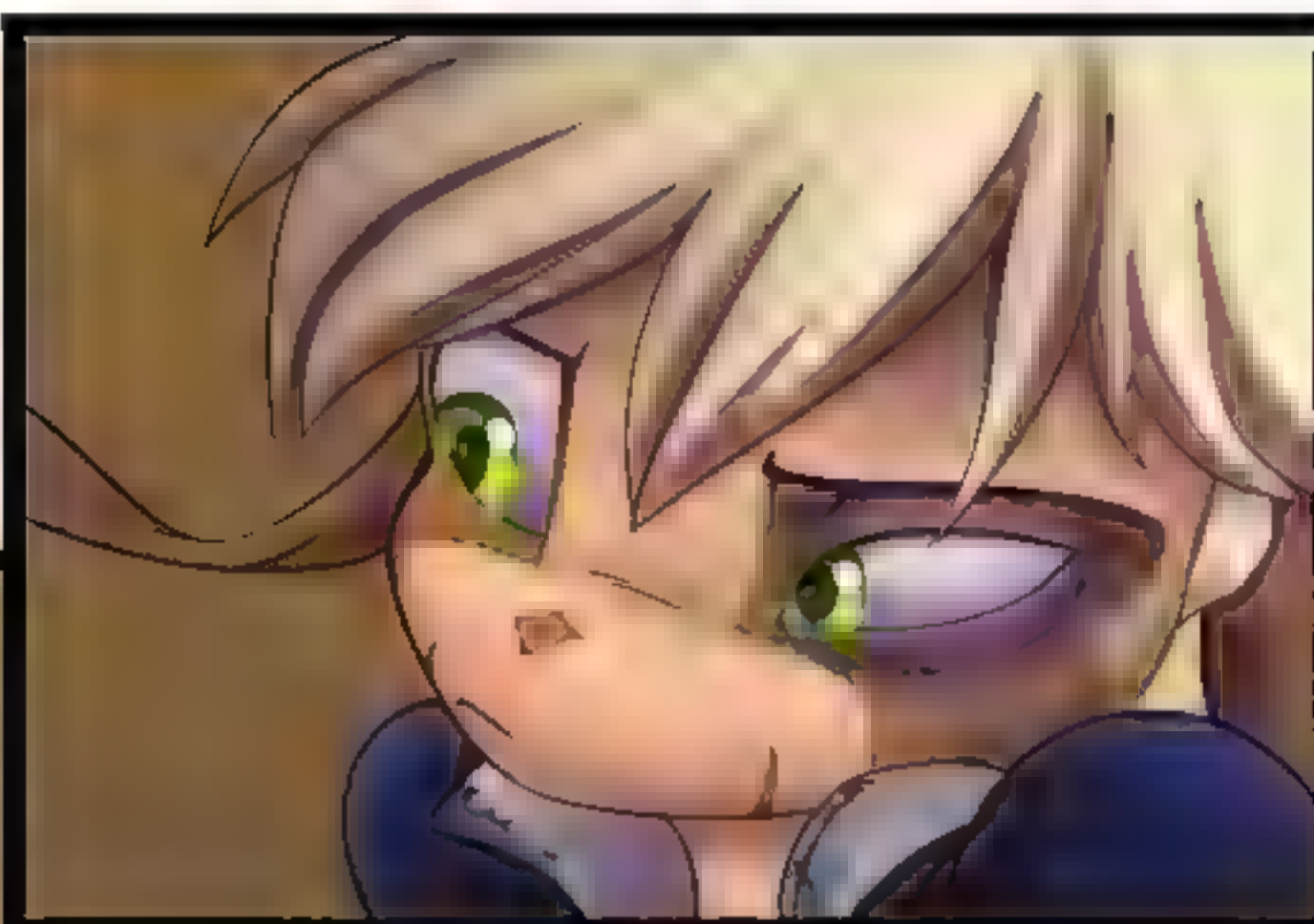
WHERE'S YOUR UMBRELLA?











HERE'S WHAT I THINK.

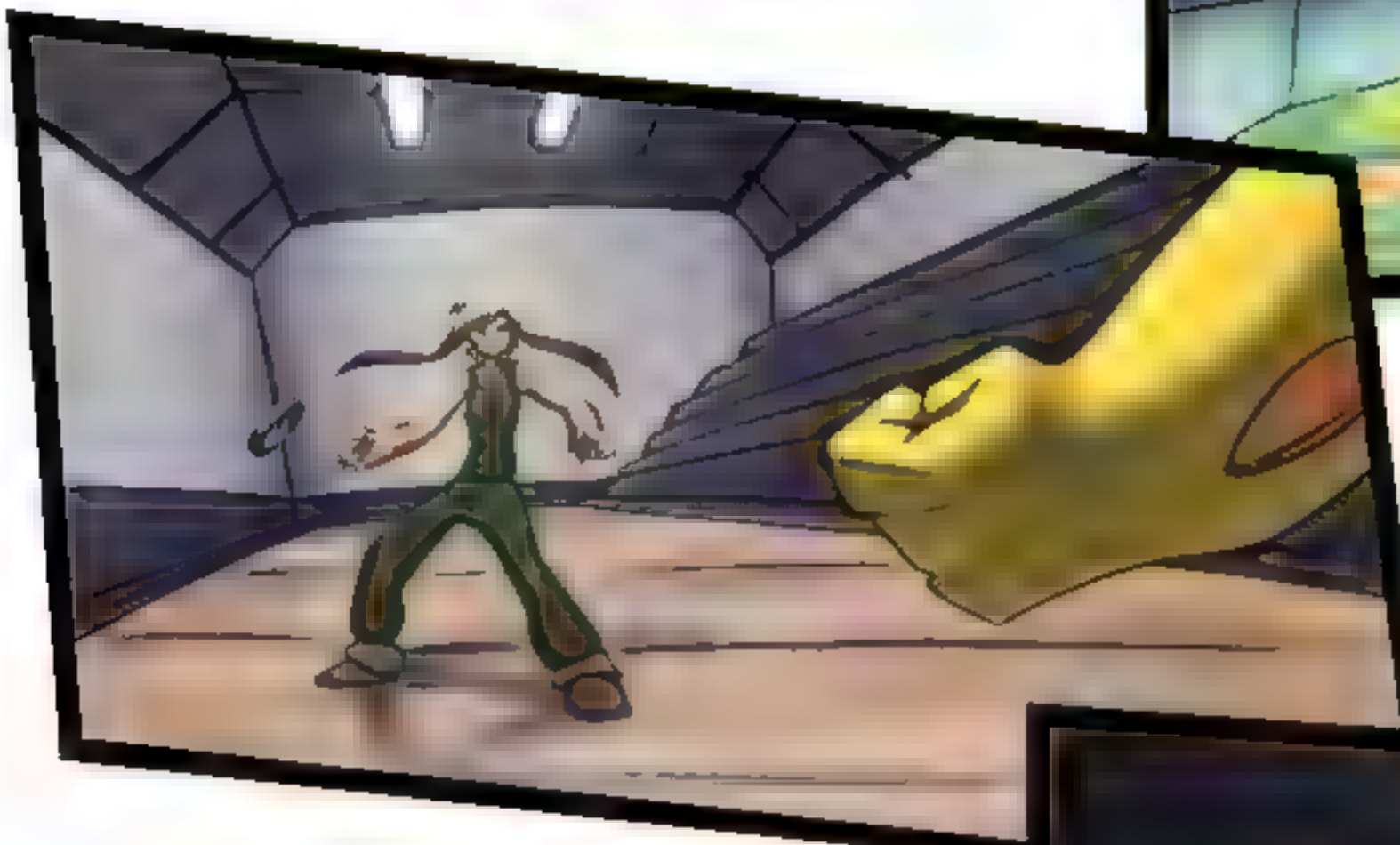
YOU HAD YOUR PLACEMENT EXAMS THIS MORNING, DIDN'T YOU?

SO I'M GUESSING YOU'VE BEEN STAYING UP LATE--

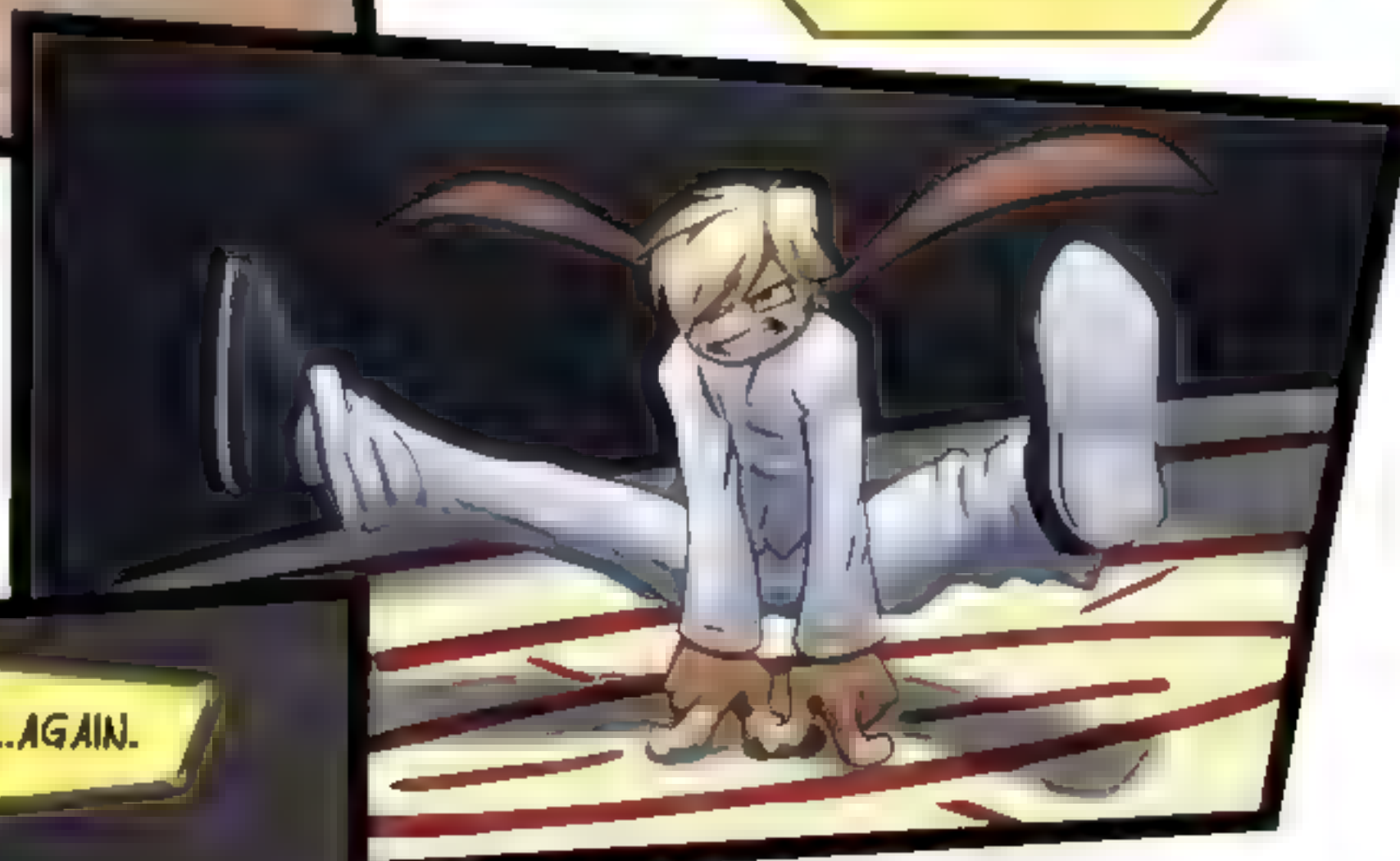


MAYBE EVEN PULLING A FEW ALL-NIGHTERS--

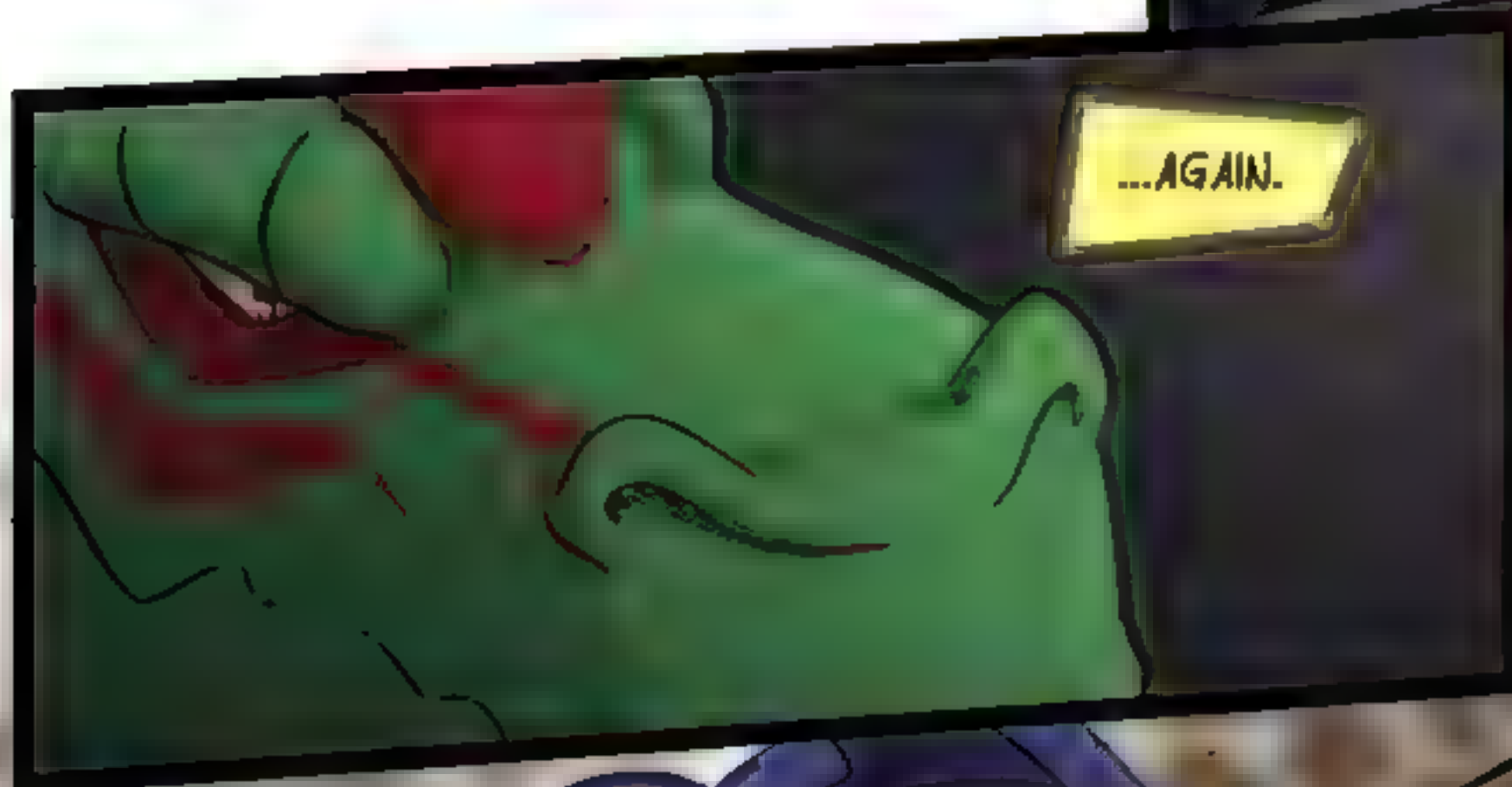
FOR THE PAST WEEK OR SO, GETTING READY TO FINALLY MOVE UP IN THE WORLD.



EXCEPT THEN DAD WENT AND FLUNKED YOU.



...AGAIN.



THAT'S REALLY NOT THE KIND OF SETBACK MOST PEOPLE JUST BRUSH OFF, YOU KNOW?

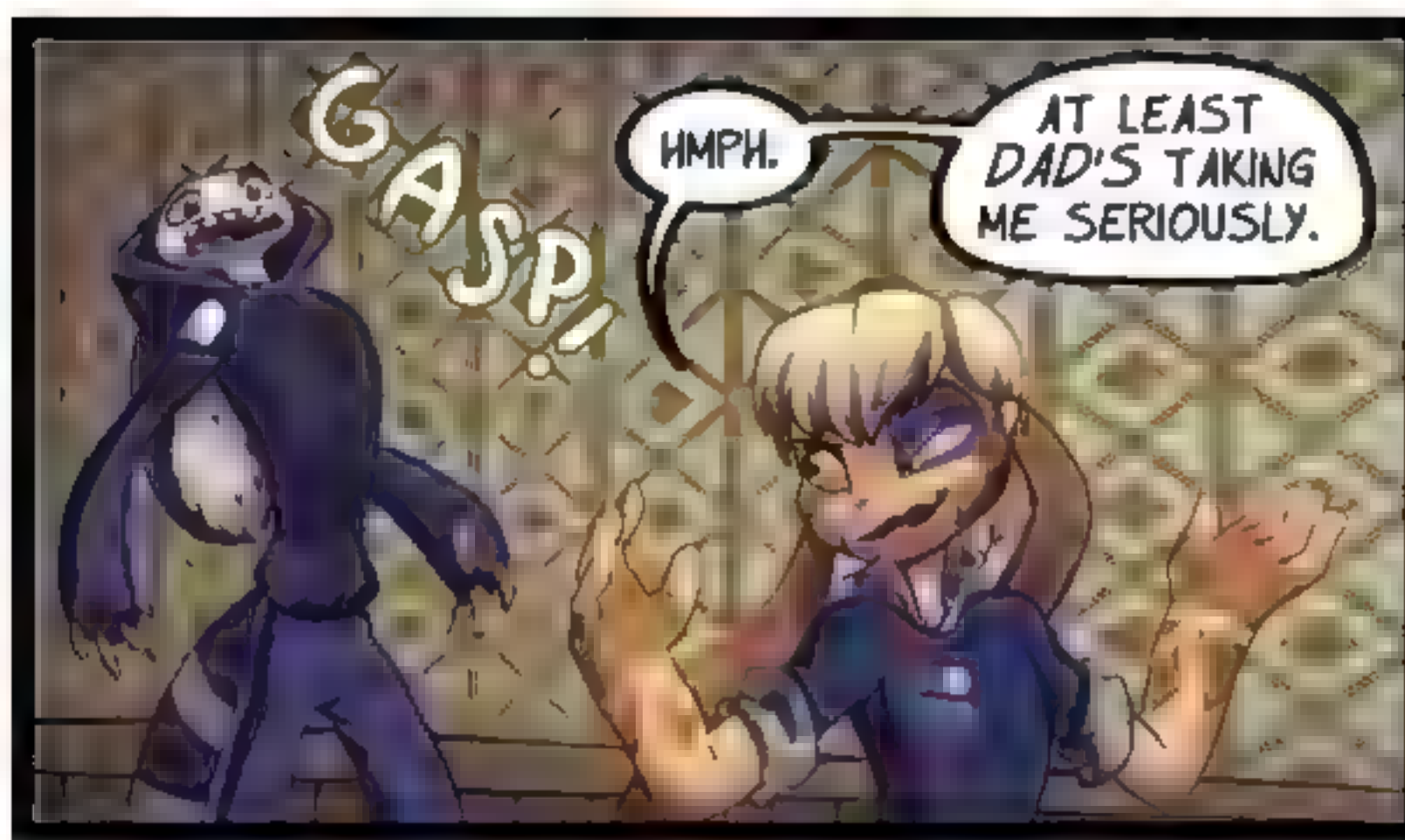
ARE YOU SAYING I HAD A MENTAL BREAKDOWN?

WHAT I'M SAYING IS YOU'VE RUN YOURSELF RAGGED, AND FOR WHAT? A BIG DISAPPOINTMENT THAT KEEPS YOU FROM A CAREER YOU REALLY WANT.

MAYBE WHAT YOU NEED IS SOME **SLEEP**.

...ALSO YOU'RE BREAKING MY RIBS.





AT LEAST
DAD'S TAKING
ME SERIOUSLY.

HMPH.

GASP!



HE'S GOT Z'S
PEOPLE ON THE JOB!
IF IT TURNS OUT I'M
LOSING MY MARBLES,
THEY'LL TELL ME.

YYYYUP,
SURE...

SO, UH,
HOW 'BOUT
YOU GO TO
SLEEP, AND **I**
GET GOING?

GET
GOING?

WAIT, I
STILL HAVE
QUESTIONS!

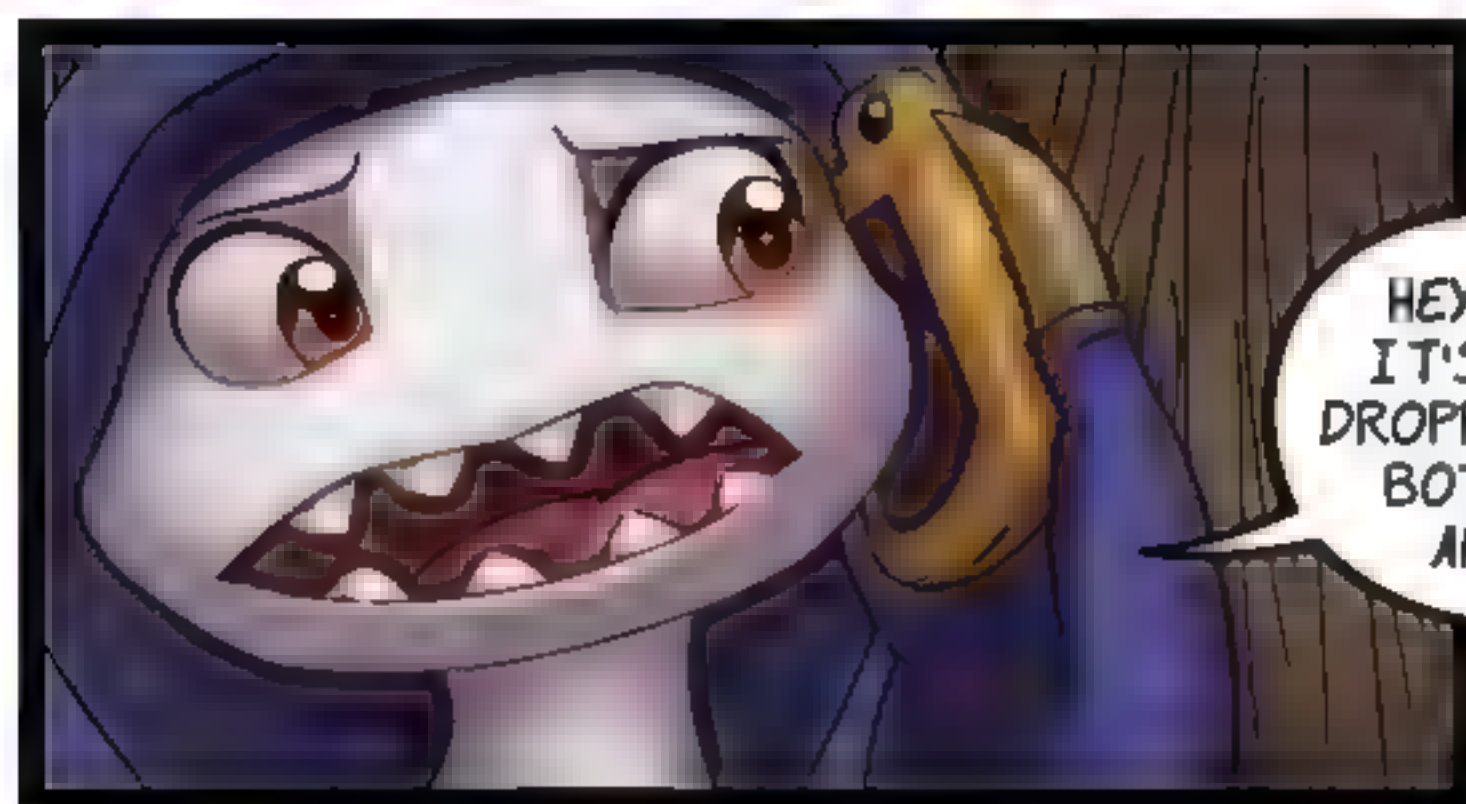
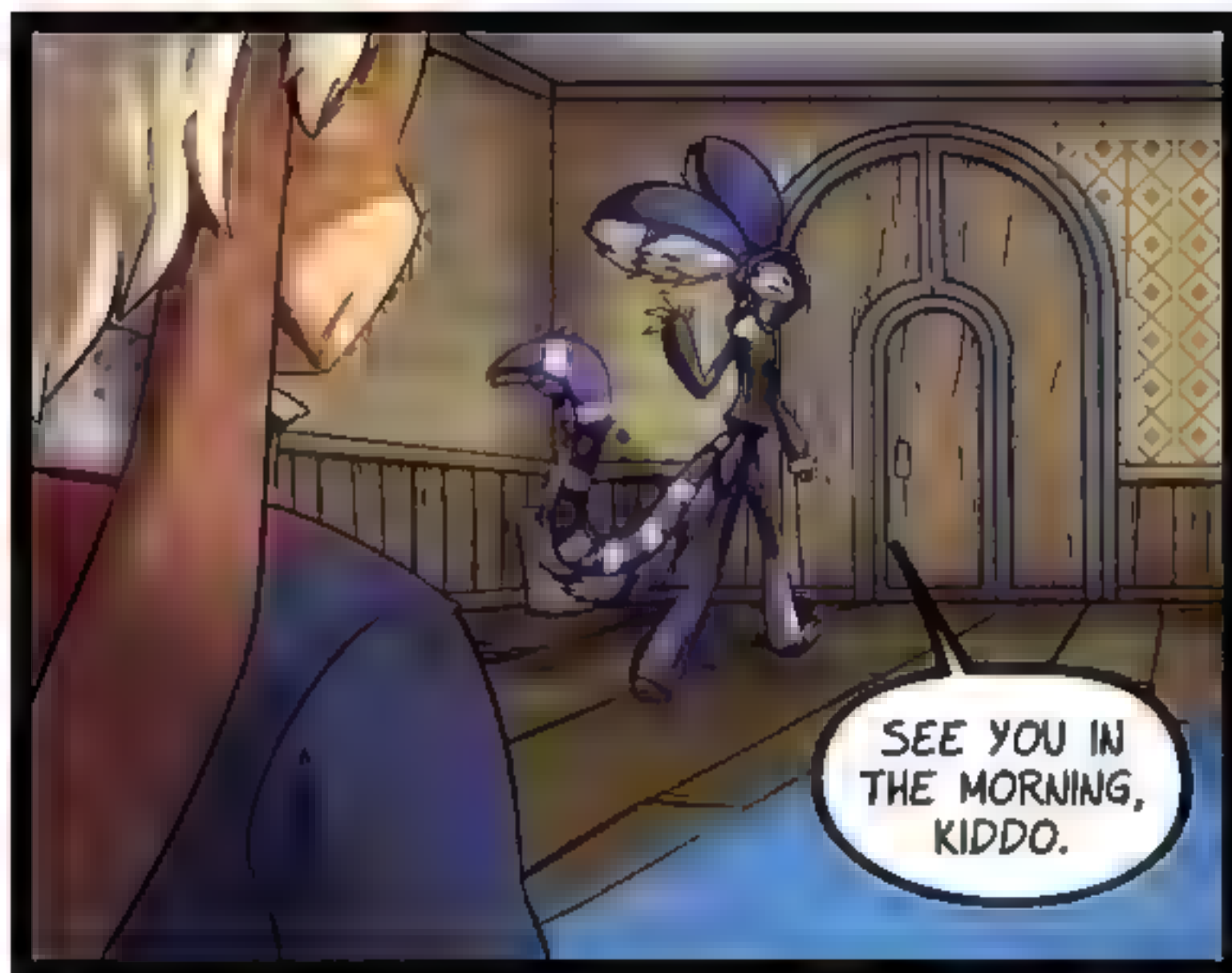


WHICH WE CAN
TALK ABOUT IN THE
MORNING, AFTER YOU'VE
GOTTEN AT **LEAST** EIGHT
HOURS OF REST.

DAD'S
ORDERS.

YOU DON'T
WANT TO DISOBEY
DAD, DO YOU?

YEAH CAN WE
NOT DO THAT? I LIKE
BEING ALIVE.





IS KHEILAFI
ACTUALLY GOING
TO BED?



YEAH, AL'S
KEEPING AN EYE
ON HER. IF THERE'S
NOTHING ELSE, I'M
GONNA GO GET SOME
SLEEP MYSELF.

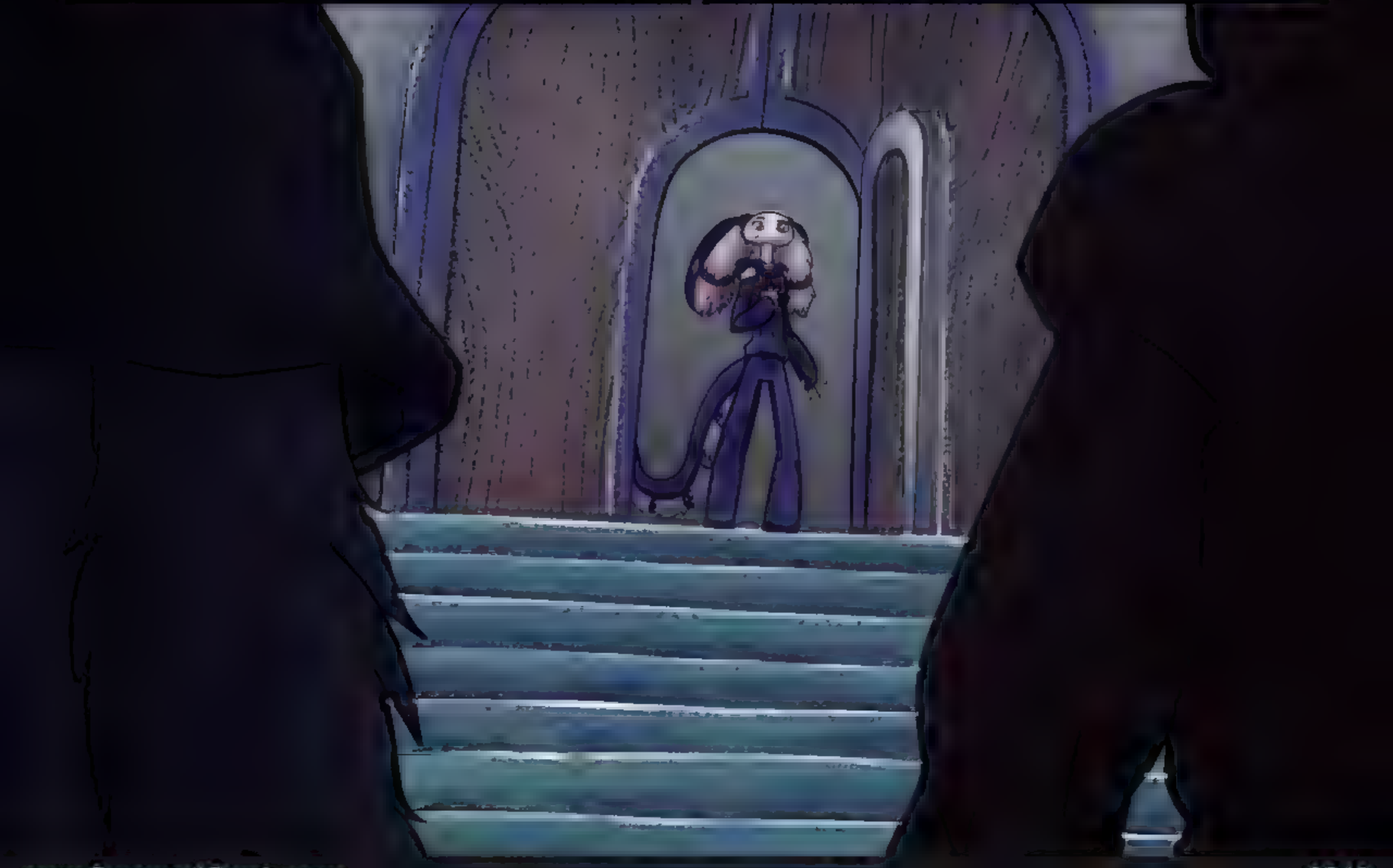
NOT YET.

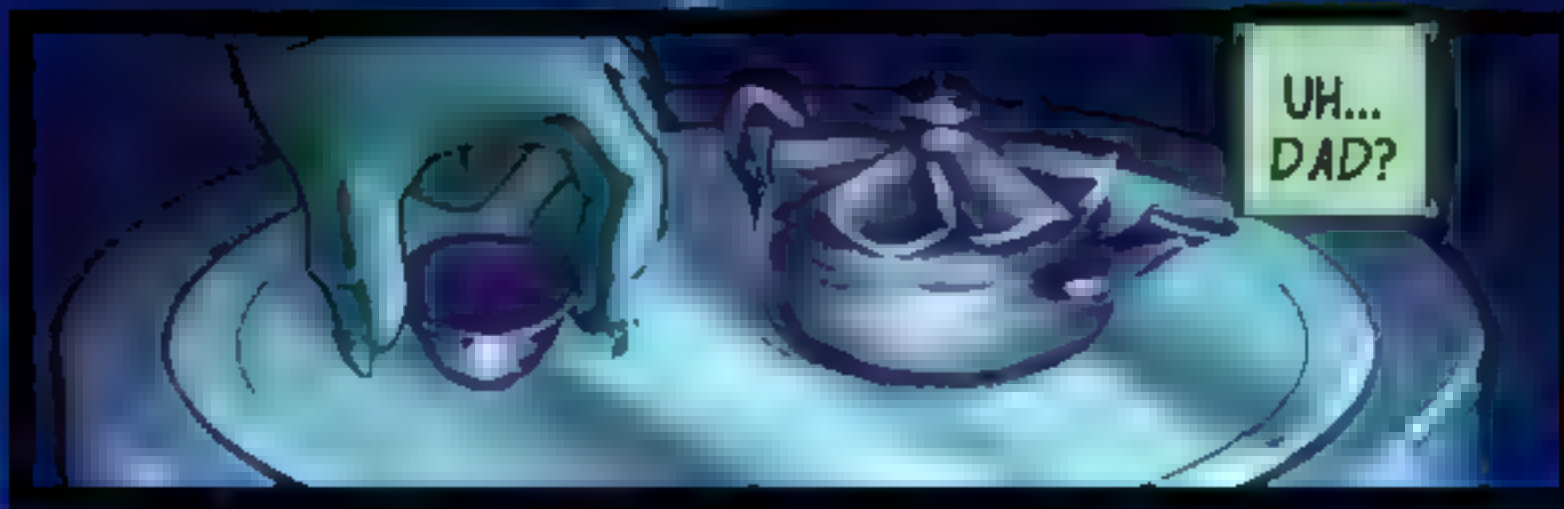


I NEED
TO ASK ONE
MORE FAVOR
OF YOU.



SURE THING,
WHAT'S--





UH...
DAD?

THE GUARDS ARE
HERE TO TAKE YOU
INTO CUSTODY.

WAIT WHAT?
DAD, *WHY?*

A PRECAUTIONARY
MEASURE.

CERTAIN...
INCONSISTENCIES
HAVE BEEN BROUGHT
TO MY ATTENTION.

WHAT'S THAT
SUPPOSED TO--

YOU WILL BE
STAYING IN TOWER
ONE UNTIL WE HAVE
MORE INFORMATION.
CHIEF ZHRENOKOG
WILL LOOK AFTER
YOUR SAFETY.

...SO ARE THEY
GOING TO READ ME MY
RIGHTS, OR WHAT?

FALLAN.

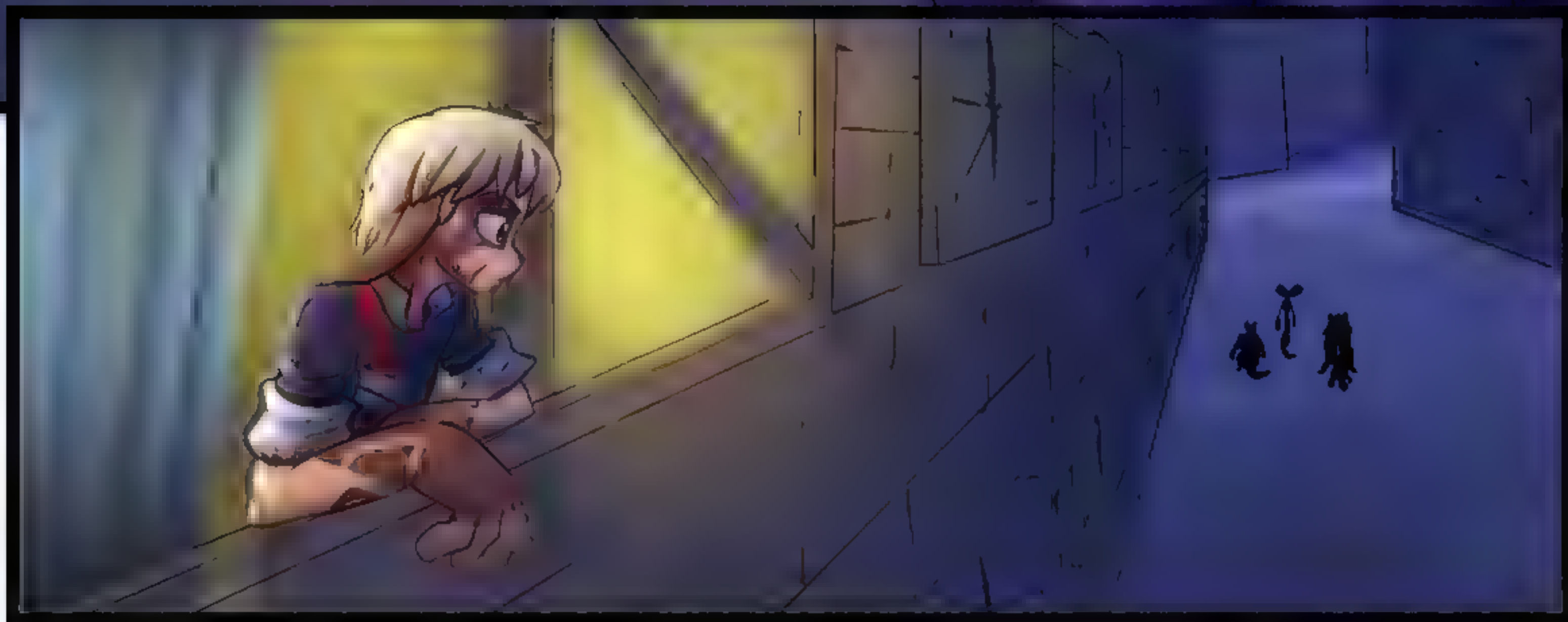
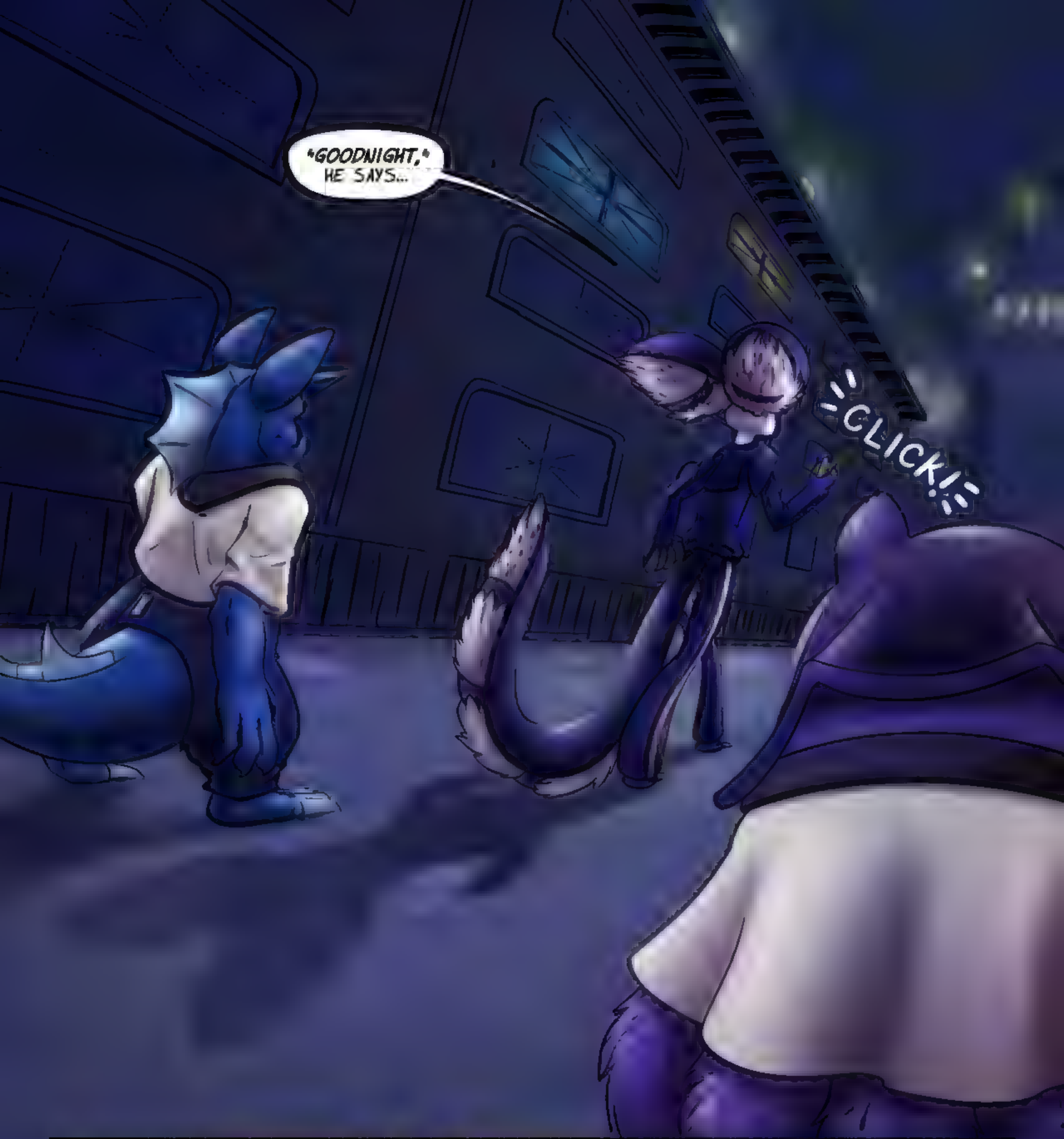
I AM A PARANOID
OLD MAN, AND YOU
ARE MY ONLY SON.

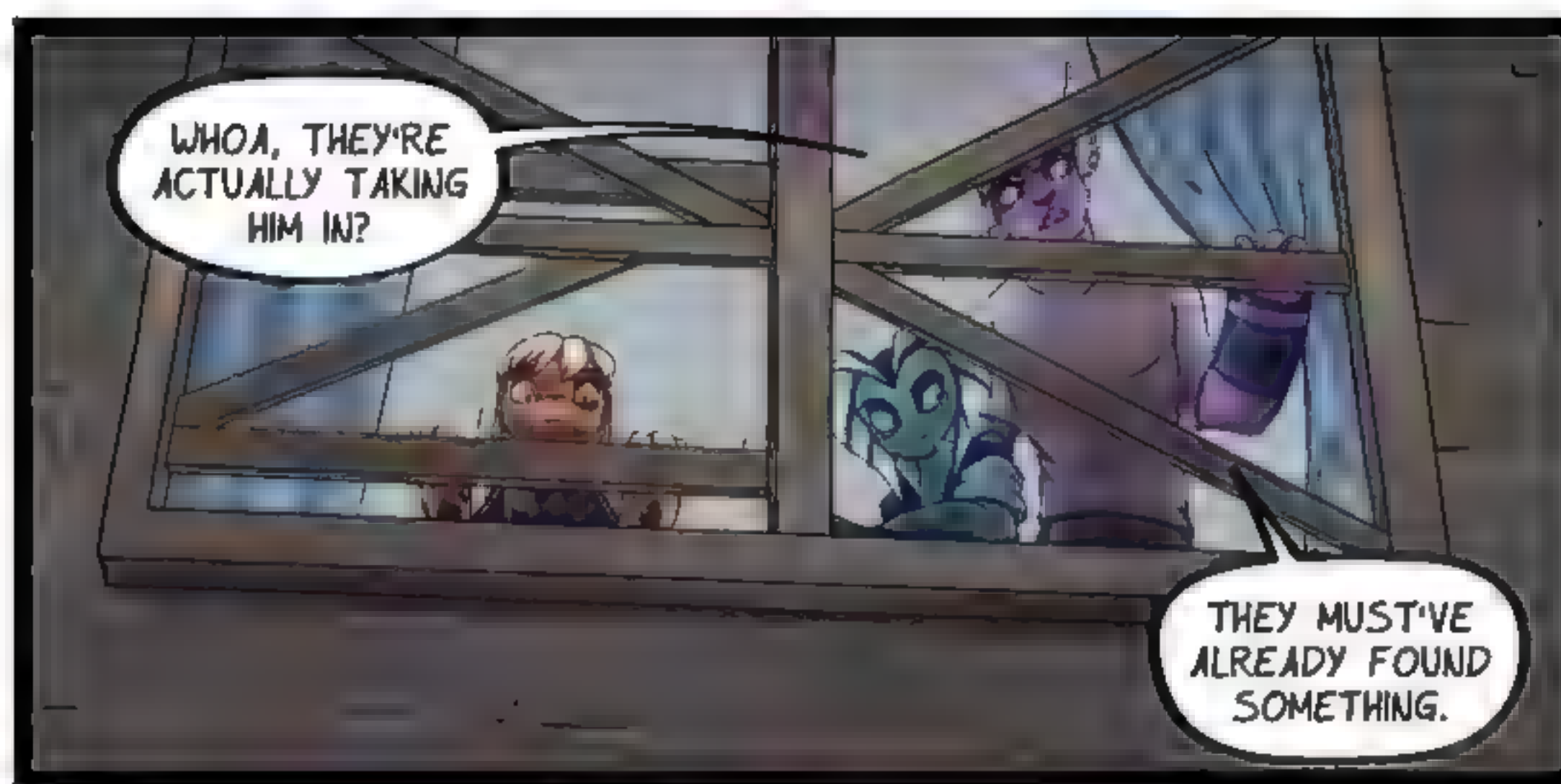
PLEASE.

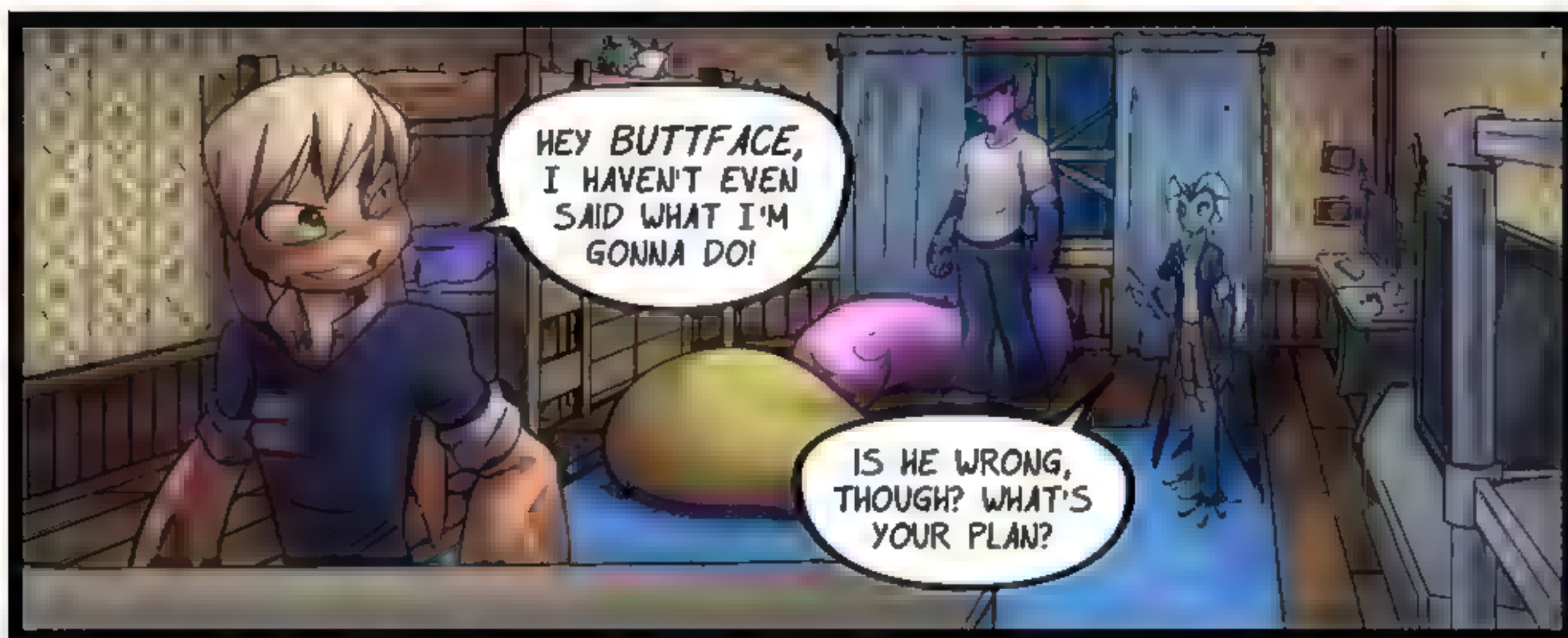
FINE, FINE, I'LL
GO WITH THEM.

THANK YOU.

GOODNIGHT,
FALLAN.







HEY BUTTFACE,
I HAVEN'T EVEN
SAID WHAT I'M
GONNA DO!

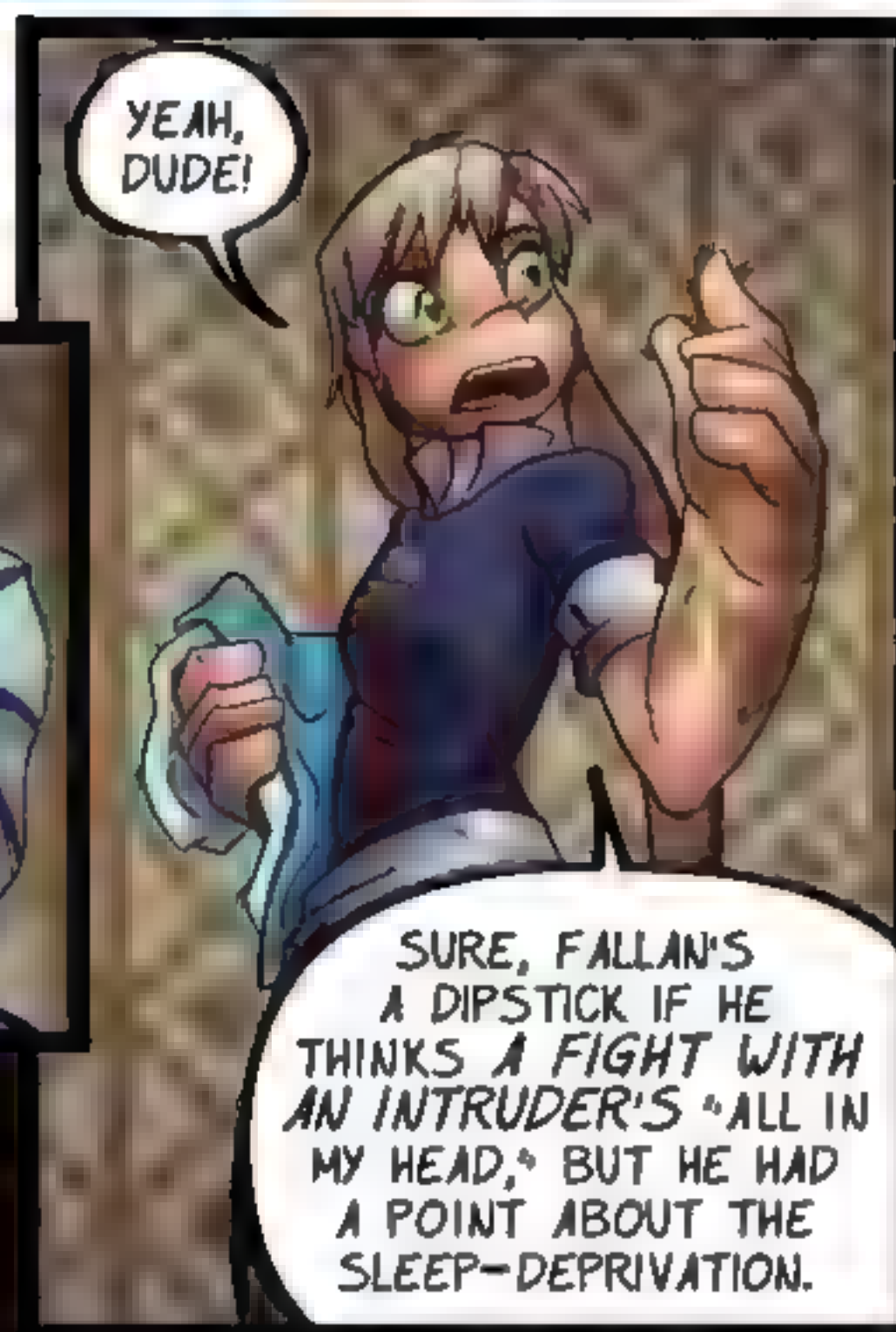
IS HE WRONG,
THOUGH? WHAT'S
YOUR PLAN?



FOR STARTERS,
I'LL GRAB A SHOWER
AND GO TO BED.



...REALLY?



YEAH,
DUDE!

SURE, FALLAN'S
A DIPSTICK IF HE
THINKS A FIGHT WITH
AN INTRUDER'S "ALL IN
MY HEAD," BUT HE HAD
A POINT ABOUT THE
SLEEP-DEPRIVATION.



GOTTA RECHARGE
AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE
FOR TOMORROW.

TOMORROW, I GO
BACK OUT TO THE WOODS
AND **BURN EVERYTHING**
UNTIL I FLUSH OUT
THAT INTRUDER!



I...

ARE YOU...

...PLEASE TELL ME YOU'RE KIDDING.



OF COURSE I'M KIDDING, DINGUS.

I'M NOT *THAT* DUMB.



FOR REAL THOUGH, I WAS THINKING...

I'VE ALREADY GOT ALL THE CREDITS I NEED TO GRADUATE IN A COUPLE OF YEARS. IT'S ONE OF THE PERKS OF HAVING LITERALLY GROWN UP HERE.

IT WOULDN'T BE HARD TO DROP A FEW CLASSES.

I COULD ASK Z IF HE'S GOT ANY INTERN SPOTS OPEN.

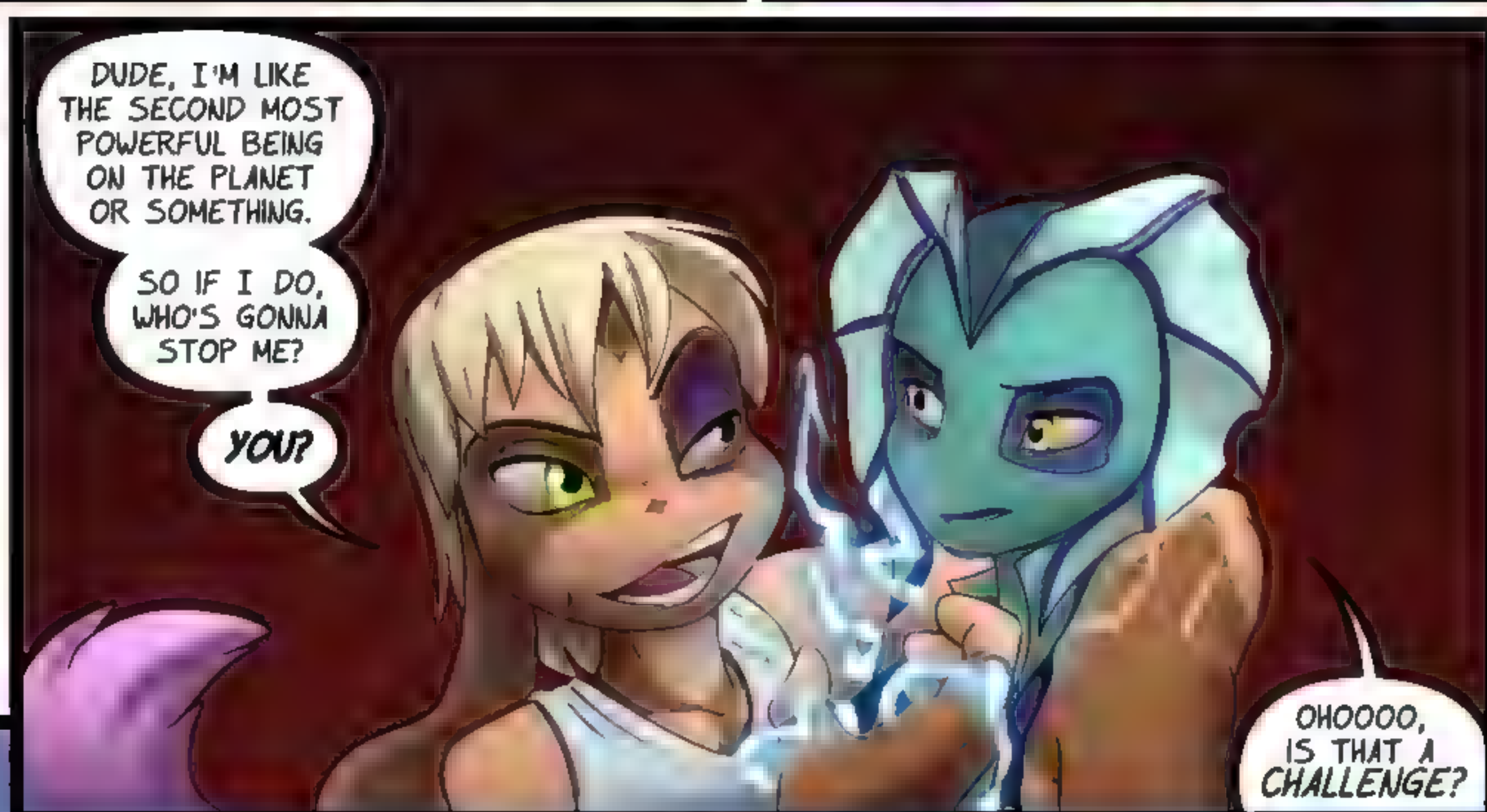
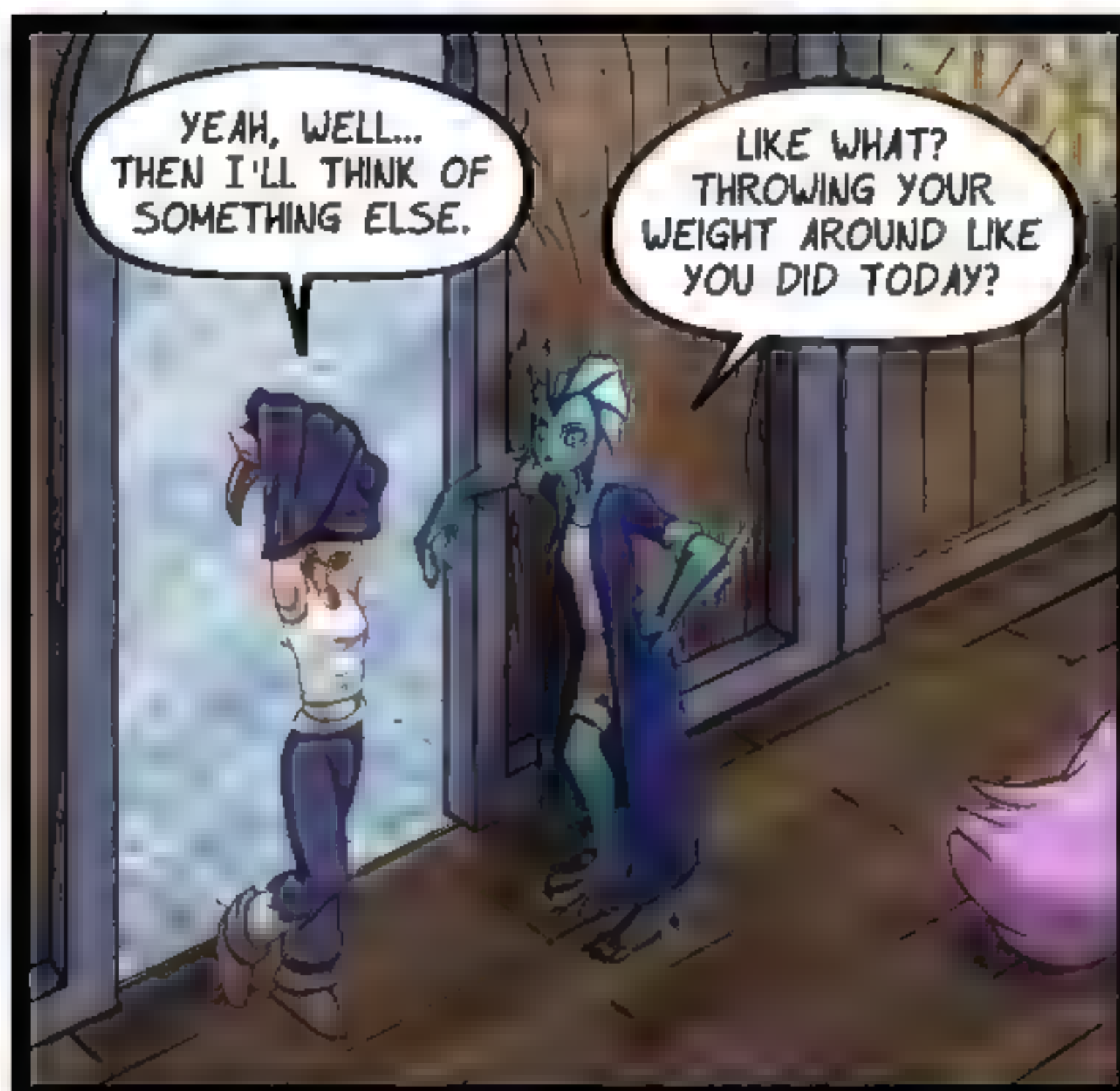
IF I'M ON THE SECURITY TEAM, MAYBE I CAN... UH... GET ACCESS TO... ...STUFF?

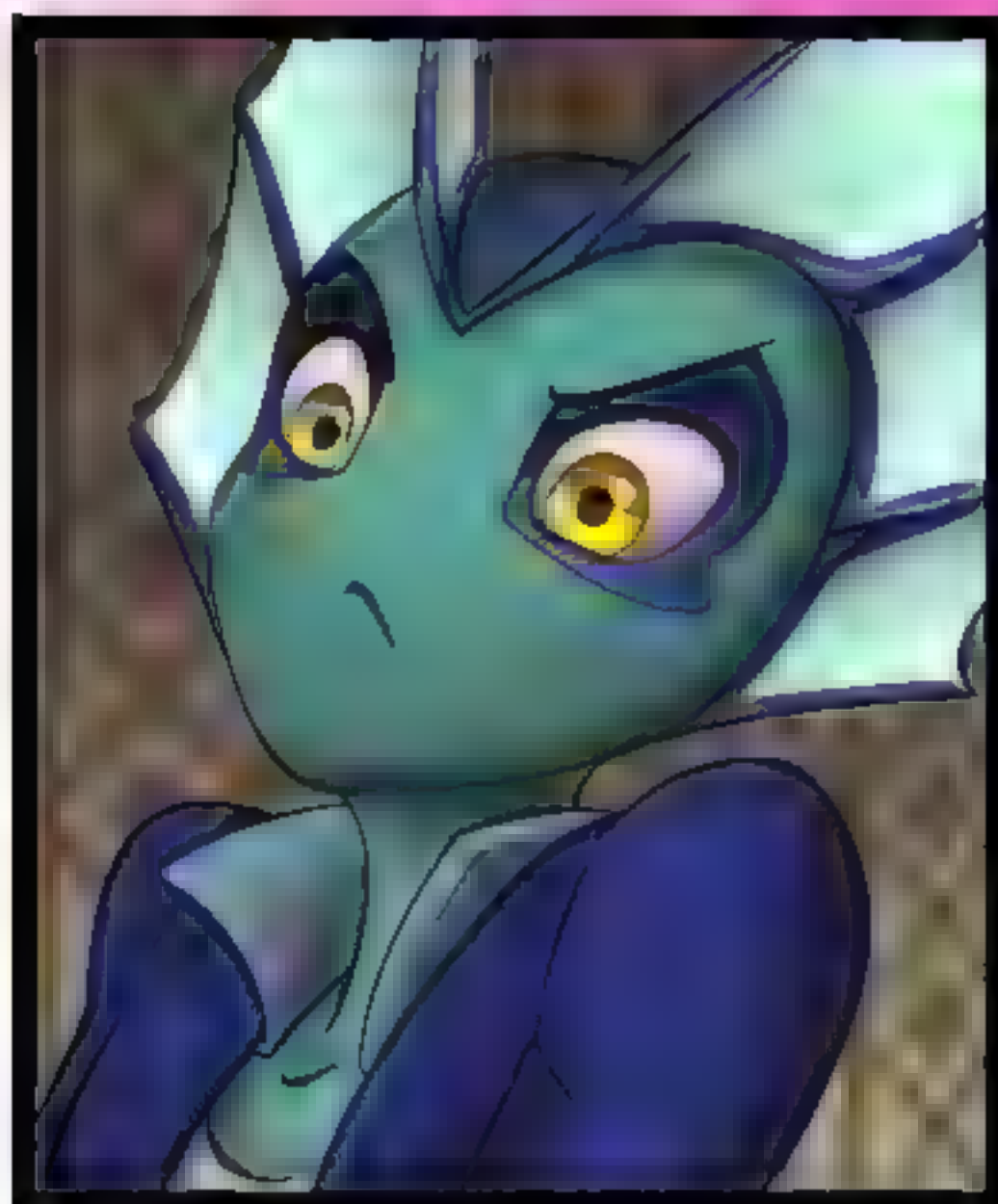
I'M KINDA PLAYING IT BY EAR.

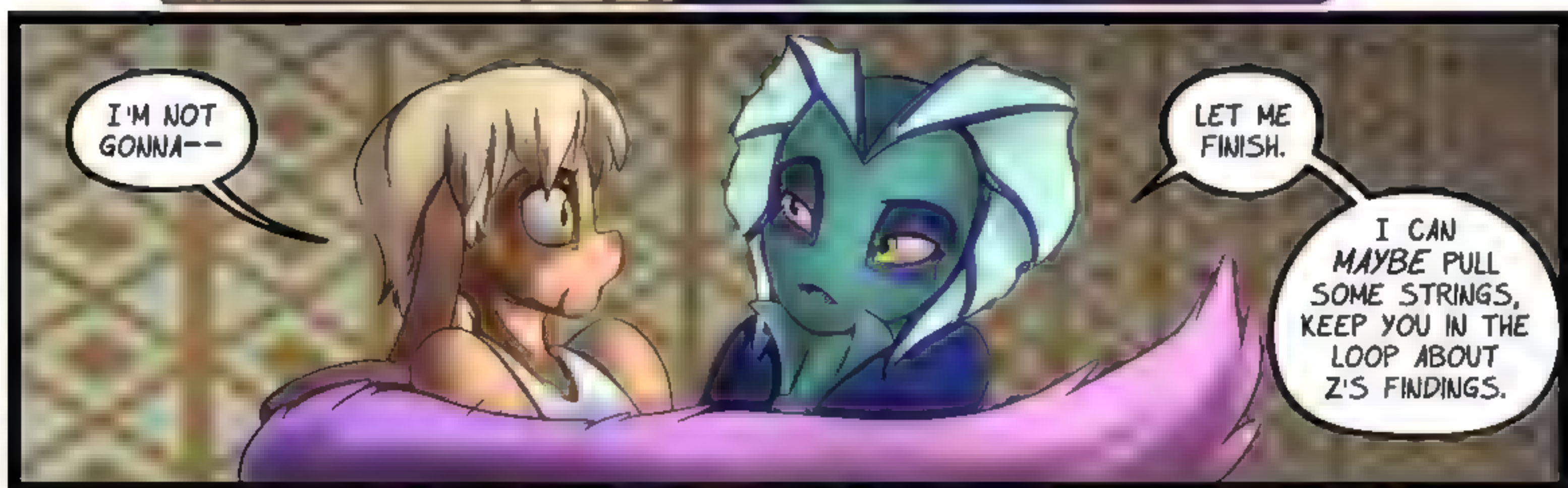
KHEIL, YOU CAN'T JUST WING THIS.

THE FACT THAT Z LETS YOU SPEND STUDY HOUR WITH HIM IN THE TRAINING HALL DOES NOT MEAN HE'LL GIVE YOU THAT KIND OF SECURITY CLEARANCE.

WHAT IF HE SHOOTS YOU DOWN?



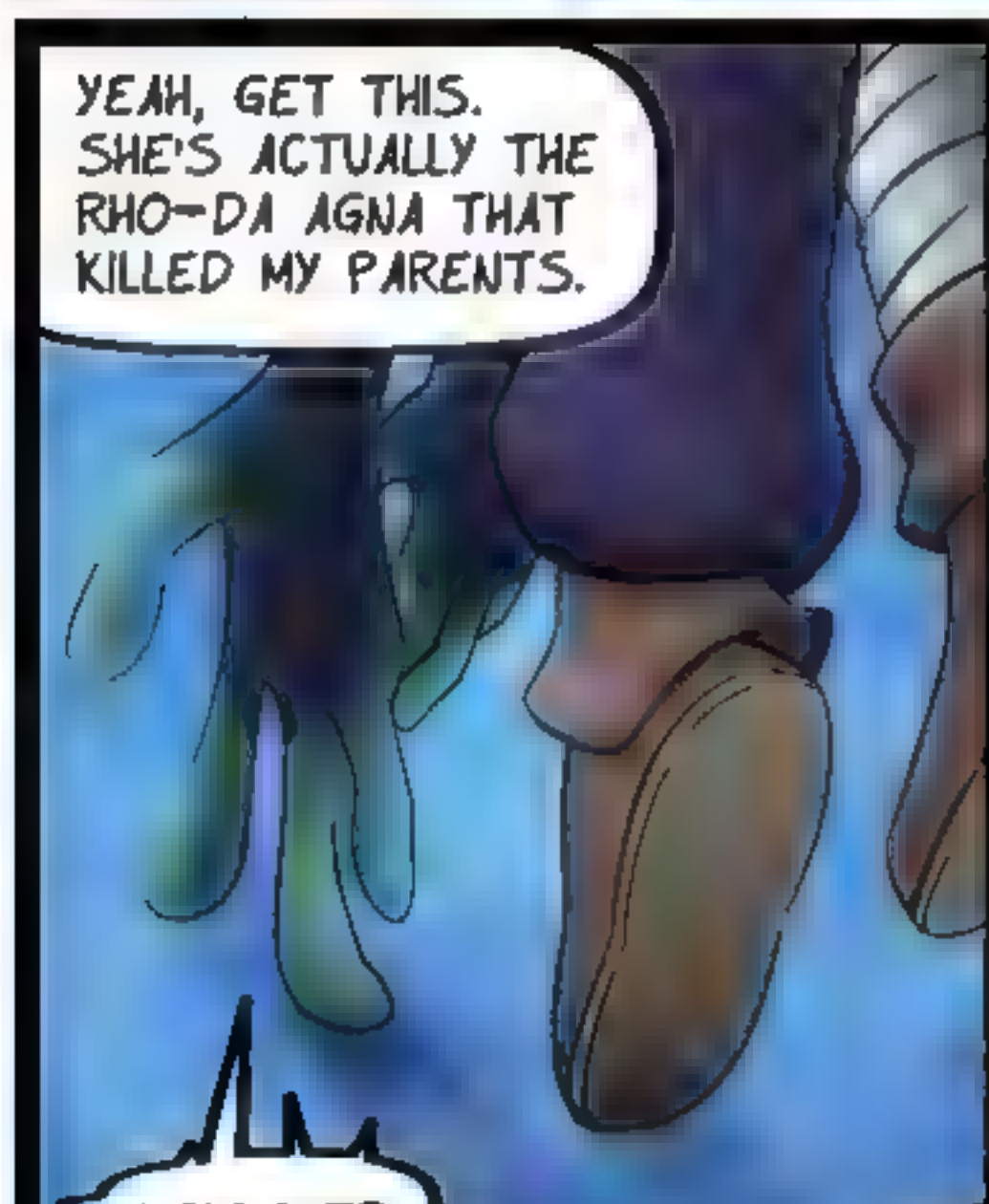






YOU KNOW
HOW YOU TOLD
ME TO TALK TO Z
ABOUT THOTZEV
BEING HERE?

THE NEW
GYM COACH?



YEAH, GET THIS.
SHE'S ACTUALLY THE
RHO-DA AGNA THAT
KILLED MY PARENTS.



THAT'S WHAT
I WAS TRYING
TO TELL YOU
EARLIER.

HOLY MOTHER
OF CRAP, I'M
SO SORRY--

WHAT?

NAH, IT'S
ALL GOOD, YOU
DIDN'T KNOW.
BESIDES,
THAT'S NOT
MY POINT.



THE POINT IS,
TOMORROW MORNING
Z'S GOING TO HELP
ME TALK TO YOUR
DAD, KHEIL.

PARTLY SO
I DON'T GET
EXECUTED.

BUT MOSTLY
TO SEE IF I CAN
GET SOME REAL
ANSWERS.

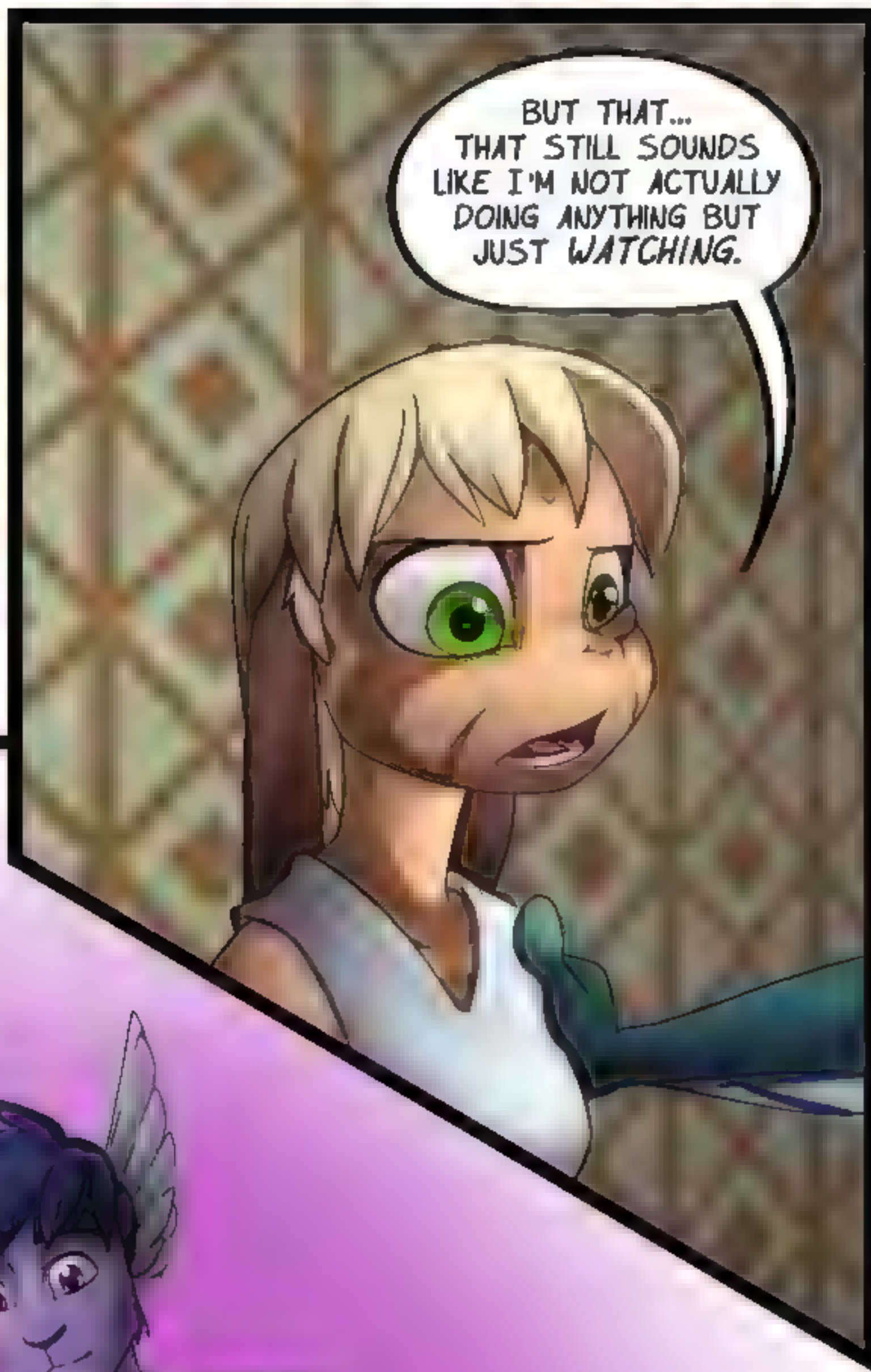
'CAUSE IF WHAT
YOU'RE SAYING IS
TRUE, THERE'S **NO WAY**
THAT BRUTE ISN'T
INVOLVED SOMEHOW.

DUDE, OZ,
DAD'S NOT GONNA
HURT YOU--

YOU DON'T
KNOW THAT.



EITHER WAY, I
KNOW I FLIPPED OUT
EARLIER, BUT SOMEONE
REALLY DOES HAVE TO
KEEP AN EYE ON HER.
WHY NOT YOU?



BUT THAT...
THAT STILL SOUNDS
LIKE I'M NOT ACTUALLY
DOING ANYTHING BUT
JUST WATCHING.



KHEIL.

I KNOW THIS
WHOLE NIGHT'S BEEN
INSANE, AND I KNOW
YOU WANT THINGS
RESOLVED.

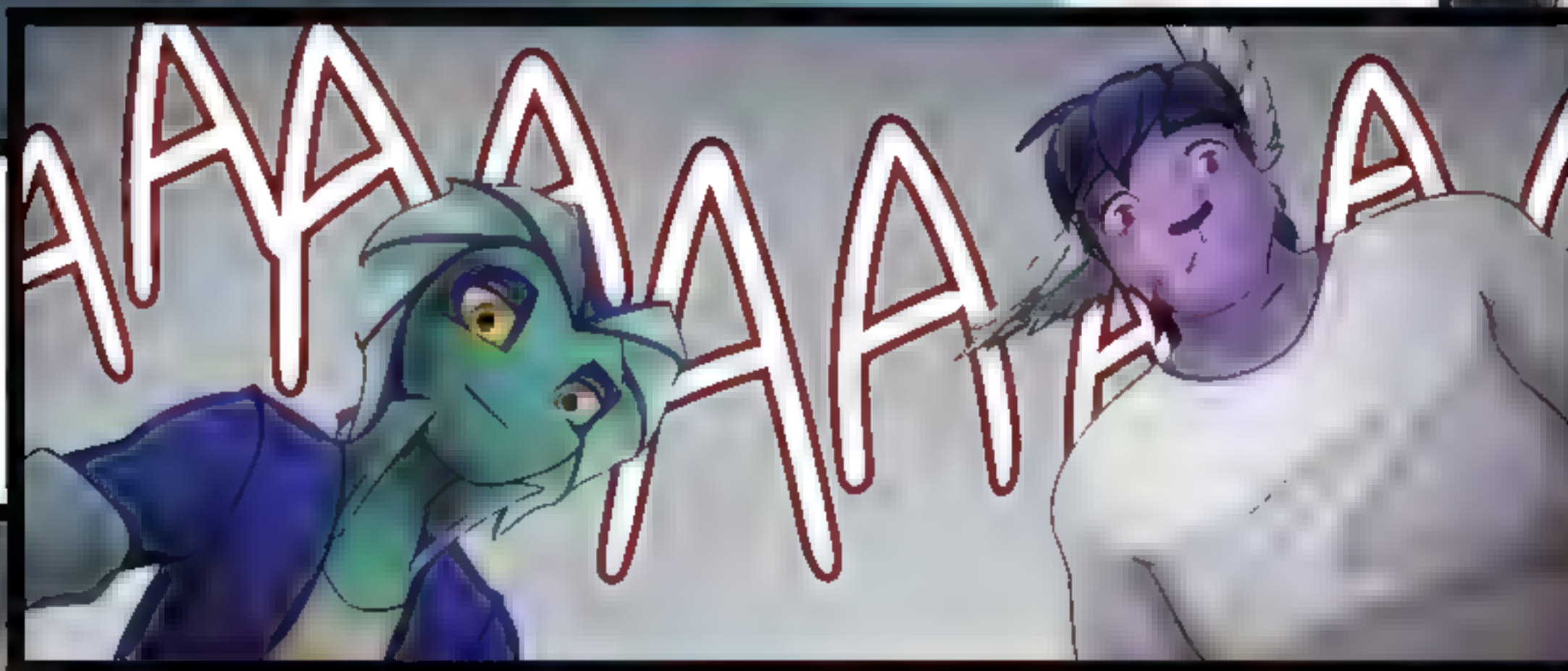
BUT THIS IS
A TIME WHEN YOU'VE
GOT TO STEP BACK AND
DELEGATE TASKS TO
THE PEOPLE BEST
SUITED TO THEM.

WE'RE NOT JUST
YOUR FRIENDS, KHEIL.
WE'RE YOUR **TEAM**.



YOU MAY BE
A BADASS, BUT
SO ARE WE.

DO YOU
TRUST US?



IN THE MORNING,
I'LL HEAD OUT TO THE
CITADEL AND KEEP AN EYE ON
THOTZEV "THE TOMBSTONE"
ZHTATZGHA.

MEANWHILE,
THE A-TEAM--

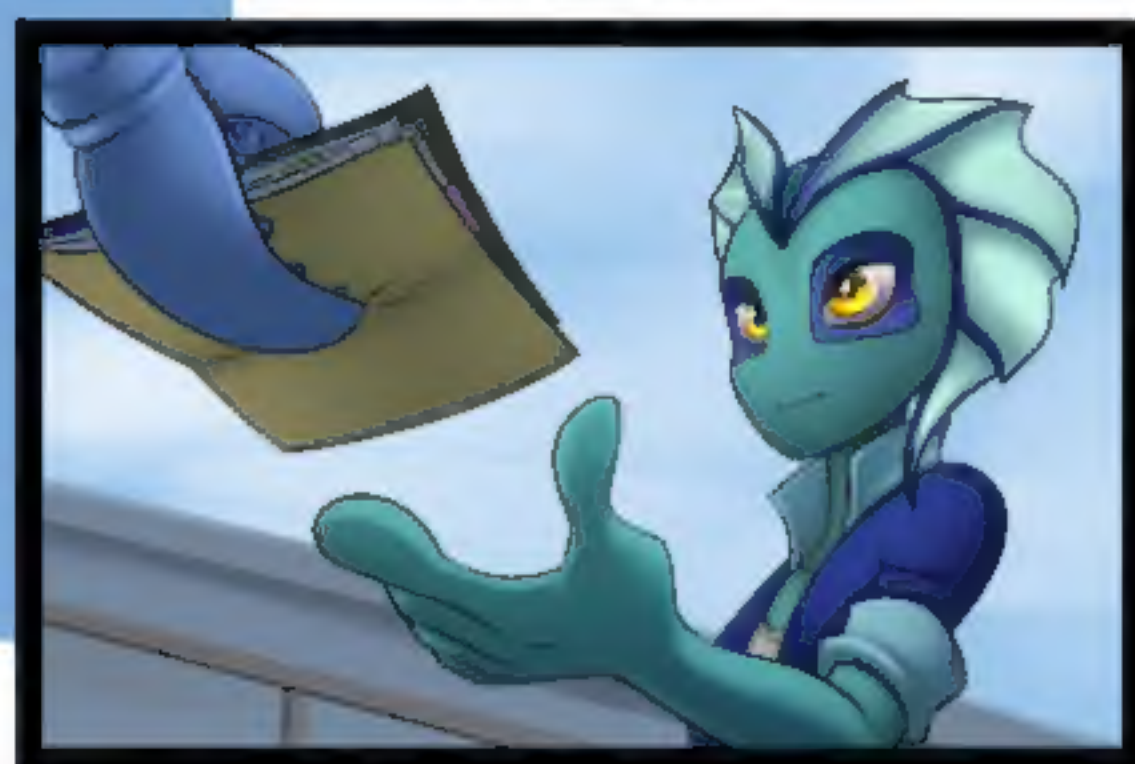


THAT'S YOU
GUYS--

--GATHERS INTEL
FROM MY DAD, AND
HOPEFULLY FROM
Z'S STAFF.



I'M GONNA SEE IF
I CAN FIGURE OUT WHEN AND
WHERE THE *WINGED MENACE*
WILL STRIKE NEXT. IF I'M LUCKY,
MAYBE I CAN GET US SOME
PHOTO EVIDENCE.



AND HOW
EXACTLY ARE
YOU PLANNING
TO PULL THAT
ONE OFF?



NOT SURE
YET. THAT'S WHY
I SAID *"IF."* IT'S
AS GOOD A PLAN
AS WE'LL GET
TONIGHT.



YEAH, THAT'S
A PRETTY GOOD
START FOR...

...UH.

KHEIL,
YOU OKAY?





WE'RE HERE
FOR YOU, DUDE.

WHAT
HE SAID.

YOU
DORKS.



FOR REAL
THOUGH, I LOVE
YOU GUYS.



THANK
YOU.



TO BE CONTINUED...